



# SHAKER HEIGHTS

**SAFETY AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MINUTES  
FRIDAY January 9, 2026 at 8:00 AM  
VIA ZOOM MEETING**

Members Present: Nancy Moore, Council Chair  
Orlando Alvarez, Council Member  
Peter Chengelis, Council Member  
Tenille Kaus, Council Member  
Jonathan Hren, Citizen Member  
Sara Schiavoni, Citizen Member

Others Present: Mayor David Weiss  
Matt Carroll, CAO  
Patrick Sweeney, Chief of Fire  
Wayne Hudson, Chief of Police  
Ramona Lowery-Ferrell, Director of Public Works  
William Gruber, Law Director  
Christian Maier, Assistant Director of Public Works  
Annette Wallace, First Call Program Coordinator

**APPROVAL OF DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES.**

The minutes of December 2025 meeting were unanimously approved.

The first meeting of the year started with introductions from the new Chairwoman, Nancy Moore, along with the new Council members, Citizen members, and City Directors.

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**Public Works City Safety Assessment**

**Presented by Christian Maier, Assistant Director**

Assistant Director Maier presented a request for the Committee's support to enter into an agreement with Partners consultants to conduct a City Safety Assessment in the amount of \$45,250. He reported that in September 2025, Public Works issued a request for proposals for a consultant to perform on-site health and safety assessments of nine City facilities and to develop standard operating procedures and inspection forms that would allow City staff to conduct biannual inspections in the future.

Mr. Maier explained that proposals were evaluated in October using a quality-based selection process by staff from Public Works, Fire, and the Building Department. He stated that Partners submitted the most comprehensive proposal and was interviewed in November, demonstrating experience with similar municipal projects and a clear understanding of the City's needs. Following the interview, partners submitted a fee proposal of \$45,250, which Mr. Maier characterized as fair and reasonable.

In response to questions from Councilmembers, Mr. Maier confirmed that cost was not considered during the initial evaluation of proposals under the quality-based selection process and that this type of formal safety assessment had not previously been conducted by the City.

Upon motion by Citizen member Hren, seconded by Councilmember Chengelis, the Committee unanimously recommended approval of an agreement with Partners to conduct the City Safety Assessment in the amount of \$45,250.

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### **Contract with Chagrin Valley Dispatch (CVD) for Employment Services for First CALL**

**Presented by William Gruber, Law Director**

Director Gruber presented a request for the Committee's recommendation to City Council to enact legislation authorizing the City, on behalf of the five participating municipalities in the First Call Program, to enter into an employment services agreement with Chagrin Valley Dispatch (CVD).

Director Gruber explained that the First Call Program began in 2021 as a mental health response initiative working alongside police and fire with licensed social workers. In July 2024, five cities formally entered into an agreement establishing the First Crisis Assistance and Local Linkage (First Call) Program, with the City of Shaker Heights serving as the operating city and grant recipient. He noted that significant grant funding had been secured, keeping local contributions relatively low in the program's early years.

Director Gruber further explained that Recovery Resources had previously provided employment, payroll, training support, and data management services for program staff; however, Recovery Resources announced in October that it would wind down operations despite having a contract in place through May. As a result, the City explored alternatives and determined that CVD was a logical partner to assume these employment services functions, given its existing relationship with the City and its placement of a social worker within the dispatch center. He emphasized that the

program would continue to be coordinated by City employee Annette Wallace and that day-to-day operations would remain substantially the same.

Ms. Wallace, Program Coordinator, expressed her support for the transition, stating that it would strengthen existing relationships with CVD and participating communities while allowing the program's work to continue effectively.

Chief Hudson and Chief Sweeney each spoke in support of the program, noting its demonstrated success in Shaker Heights and its value to regional partners.

In response to a question from Councilmember Chengelis regarding potential cost changes, Director Gruber indicated that program costs would continue to be covered through existing program funding and that any potential administrative fee from CVD, if requested, would likewise be paid through the program. He also confirmed that a draft contract had been prepared and that final language was expected to be completed in time for Council consideration later in the month.

Upon motion by Councilmember Chengelis, seconded by Citizen member Hren, the Committee unanimously recommended that City Council enact legislation authorizing the City, on behalf of the five First Call municipalities, to enter into an employment services agreement with Chagrin Valley Dispatch.

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### **Public Works Backflow Preventer Maintenance Contract**

#### **Presented by Shannon Marlin, Public Works Building Superintendent**

Superintendent Marlin presented a request for the Committee's support to increase the City's existing contract with Breakfire, Inc. for the 2025 Backflow Preventer Maintenance Program from \$43,259 to \$62,188.

Mr. Marlin explained that the City maintains 31 backflow preventers across various municipal buildings and irrigation systems as required by the Cleveland Division of Water (CWD) to protect drinking water quality. He noted that CWD requires annual testing each May, and that any valves failing inspection must be repaired or replaced.

Mr. Marlin reported that testing costs have remained relatively stable at just under \$5,000 annually; however, repair and replacement costs have increased in recent years. In 2024, 13 of 28 valves failed testing, resulting in approximately \$30,000 in repair and replacement expenses. In 2025, 15 valves failed testing, with costs to date exceeding \$43,000, and one additional valve still requiring replacement. He explained that

completing this work would exceed the current \$50,000 contract limit, necessitating the requested increase.

In response to questions from Councilmembers, Mr. Marlin confirmed that the remaining work had not yet been performed and needed to proceed as soon as possible. Finance Director Potts advised that the additional costs would be paid from the 2026 budget.

Further discussion addressed the lifespan of backflow preventers and factors affecting their durability, including debris from water main breaks and general wear over time. Mr. Marlin and Director Lowery-Ferrell noted that backflow preventers are required devices with no alternative substitutes, and that repairs are attempted before replacement whenever feasible.

Upon motion by Councilmember Alvarez, seconded by Citizen member Schiavoni, the Committee unanimously recommended approval of increasing the Breakfire, Inc. contract to \$62,188 for the 2025 Backflow Preventer Maintenance Program.

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### **Fire Department Donation of Horton Rescue Squads**

#### **Presented by Chief Patrick Sweeney**

Chairwoman Moore introduced the final agenda item regarding the Fire Department's proposed donation program for two, out-of-service Horton Rescue Squad vehicles in 2026 and invited Fire Chief Patrick Sweeney to present. Chief Sweeney explained that the City currently operates three frontline rescue squads and has historically retained additional units as backup due to significant manufacturing and delivery delays that arose during COVID, which extended procurement timelines from approximately six months to as long as three years. He noted that the Department recently placed a new 2025 Horton Rescue Squad into service, and that a replacement vehicle is included in the 2026 capital budget, leaving the City in a strong position with sufficient operational redundancy.

Chief Sweeney stated that the Department now has two older vehicles—the 2009 and 2014 Horton Rescue Squads—that could be removed from the fleet. He recommended donating these units to neighboring communities experiencing critical equipment shortages: the 2009 vehicle to the City of Maple Heights, whose rescue squad was destroyed in a serious accident, and the 2014 vehicle to the Village of Oakwood, which lost a unit to a mechanical fire. He emphasized that while each vehicle could potentially be sold on GovDeals for approximately \$10,000, the regional public safety benefit of donation was far greater, reducing reliance on mutual aid and supporting neighboring departments.

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### **Deer Management Program - Informational Update (Added Item)**

Chairwoman Moore added an informational item to the agenda regarding the City's Deer Management Program, noting that all members of Council had received a recent memo from the Communications and Marketing Department. She explained that, consistent with past practice, the City seeks to provide the community with robust and transparent information at the outset of each winter program. She acknowledged that deer management remains a complex and sometimes controversial policy issue and emphasized the City's long-standing approach of soliciting diverse perspectives through the Deer Management Program Advisory Committee and community surveys while ultimately pursuing a practical, common-sense strategy.

Chairwoman Moore directed members and the public to the dedicated Deer Management Program page on the City's website, highlighting this year's new emphasis on a deer sterilization component implemented by White Buffalo. She explained that sterilization reduces future births over time, works best in densely populated areas where traditional culling is more difficult, and must—under Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) rules—be paired with a limited culling program. She noted that treated deer live out their natural lifespans and therefore continue to contribute to habitat damage and vehicle-collision risk, which is why the combined approach is necessary. Chairwoman Moore further stated that initial sterilization efforts would occur over one to three nights and that data from South Euclid has demonstrated the potential effectiveness of this regional collaboration.

Police Chief Wayne Hudson added that all culling activities are conducted only with prior written permission from property owners and adjacent landowners, refuting claims circulating on social media that deer are removed from private property without consent. Mayor Weiss remarked that the City has considered non-lethal alternatives for many years and that the current approach reflects lessons learned from South Euclid and coordination with Beachwood, both of which are participating in the expanded sterilization program. He encouraged residents to consult the City's website and its extensive FAQ section for accurate information.

Councilmember Kaus read into the record (without identifying the student) a letter from a minor at Onaway School expressing concerns about safety and urging that households with children have security cameras. She suggested that City departments consider outreach to Onaway regarding safety education. Mayor Weiss requested that the letter be shared with his office, noting that the City regularly responds to student correspondence as part of civic engagement efforts. Chief Hudson also advised that the Police Department will begin visiting each school at least once per month starting January 1.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:07 am. The next meeting will be February 6, 2026 at 8:00 am.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Nancy Moore, Council Chairperson  
Safety & Public Works Committee