

THE VILLAGE OF ST. BERNARD
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

November 13th, 2025

The St. Bernard Village Committee of the Whole was held on November 13th, 2025, in Council Chambers.

Roll call showed all seven members were present: Mr. Moreton, Mr. Stuchell, Mr. Edwards, Ms. Hausfeld, Mr. Schildmeyer, Mr. Culbertson, and Mr. Estep

A motion by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Estep, to approve the written minutes of the October 23rd, 2025, council meeting. Motion passes 7-0. Minutes will stand as submitted.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- I have on the agenda to discuss Ordinance 28 2025 to contract with Hamilton County Building Department Services. Who would that fall under and who will be discussing?

Safety and Service Director, Mr. Wendling- With the Law Director not here, I can talk about that. We have identified the Hamilton County Building Department as a very viable option to handle our building services and serve as our Chief Building Official. The reasoning behind this, it's been in the works for some time, but they offer a deep level of experience. They have multiple building inspectors who can go out and perform duties for us, and it will just be a more consistent process. They are compensated through the building inspection fees. There would not be any direct billing to the village. It would all go directly through the county. With any permit, they wouldn't review it until they knew that it had passed our zoning. So that is something that AJ Schwier will have to process and will have to approve before they will even consider the permit. But we have talked to other jurisdictions that are using them. They are very happy with them and feel that the service is superior to what they've had in the past.

Mayor, Mr. Stuchell- Again, this has been in process for some time. At least the research of it and we have had a working relationship with Gerry Stoker, but it was just time to look for some other options. The resources available through the county are tremendous. I feel we will be in a much better position. Once you're a partner with Hamilton County, we would be able to, you know, be the recipient on demand for certain services. So, when we have a situation, let's say you have a car into a building and this requires a structural engineer, Expects doesn't have that. So, Hamilton County would provide that on demand. I feel it's going to be more efficient, you know, their online portal as far as for, you know, uploading documents and doing majority of the work online is going to be much more efficient. I think this is the right decision.

Council Member, Mr. Schildmeyer- If approved, when would this take effect on new permits?

Safety and Service Director, Mr. Wendling- January 1st. The goal would be to close out as many permits as possible before then, but there could be so overlap. Our contract with Expects does last through March, but I have talked to Gerry Stoker, and he does understand the situation, but we would be able to start transferring permits on January 1st.

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- Do we have an accurate understanding if this will cost us more or less than what we are currently doing?

Mayor, Mr. Stuchell- I mean that the one easy decision is the fact that we're not going under contract with Hamilton County for any kind of an established fee. They're being compensated through permitting. So, we're not paying another professional consultant or another professional for a retainer, or we're not paying billable hours for review of service or plan or that kind of thing. I mean, it's all done. Every bit of it. So, it's the best possible situation we could possibly have.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Moreton, to place Ordinance 28 2025 on the table for the next council meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- With the Law Director absent, Ordinance 27 2025 is for the solid waste collection fee for residential accounts for the year 2026. We do this every year, and it is pretty much self-explanatory.

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- We had our Finance Committee Meeting today where we reviewed the entire proposed budget for 2026 and reviewed the budget we are currently working with, and I remember having this conversation with residents a year ago about this. This fee is even more necessary now. I am absolutely in support of this ordinance.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer seconded by Mr. Moreton, to place Ordinance 27 2025 on the table for the next council meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

Safety and Service Director, Mr. Wendling- We do need to get the renewal contract ordinance for Alloy Development, who serves as the village's economic developer, on for the next council meeting. I just wanted to remind everyone that this is a contract that we maintain for economic development services. Alloy helps us with retention of our current business, and they also market vacant properties and buildings to potential tenants. I think they provide valuable resources to us and we do not have an in-house position, so this is a savings for us as well.

Council Member, Mr. Schildmeyer- Are we just extending their contract?

Safety and Service Director, Mr. Wendling- Yes, it is the same contract including cost, that is correct.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Moreton, to place Ordinance 29 2025 on the table for the next council meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- I have given everybody committee assignment page. We have conflicting sources on how these are set. So, in the Rules of Council, the President of Council sets the committee assignments. I was told late this afternoon that our Codified Ordinances section 121.10 states that the Committee on Committees will make the committee assignments. In talking to Valerie, we will address it next year with an ordinance to resolve the two conflicting statements. Since an ordinance supersedes our Rules of Council, I am going to leave it up to the

Committee of Committees, which includes Mr. Schildmeyer, Mr. Culbertson and Mr. Moreton. Do either of you have any comments, or suggestions? Are you all ok with these assignments?
Mayor, Mr. Stuchell- So your preference is not to have the mayor choose the committees?

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- We will have to discuss that in the new ordinance for this next year.

Council Member, Mr. Culbertson- I am fine with these committees the way they are.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- So, typically on Inauguration Day, since we just had an election, we read the committee assignments at the Inauguration, which is in three weeks. That is why I started working on it so we would have something before I got my answer back. I'll leave it up to you guys.

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- So, are we looking for a vote to approve this tonight?

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- If you all give the ok, then I will keep it and get with the new member o council who is here tonight, after the meeting as long as everyone is good with it.

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- I support these committees.

Council Member, Ms. Hausfeld- I don't have a problem with any of the committees that I am on. The only problem I have, and this is no regard to the new council member, but I have been up here since 2005 with the exception of two years. It was always that the new people would sit in seats one and two versus the last seat. No offense, but I think I have earned the right to finally sit in the last seat for a change. I do not mind staying on Safety, but if we have to change it a little bit to where I am in the last seat, that's where I want to be. That is my only preference.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- I'll change the entire council and committee of the whole agendas because we voted a few years back that council will sit in order the way the committees are read at the meetings. There is no preferential anymore and all of that has been thrown out. If you look at tonight's agenda, you can see we go right down the line. So, if we need to, we can move Safety at the end to make you happy, then I guess we can do that, if everyone else is in favor of that also.

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- I don't mean to be argumentative with you, and I'm not just saying this because I am one of the newer members here. I think we should be removing all sources of hierarchy that we can. Whether it be of seniority, whether it be whatever reason, I think verbalizing and establishing some sort of hierarchy based off what seat we're sitting in seems a bit juvenile. I don't think this is the best way for us to spend our time here worrying about seating assignments. It sounds like it is going to be a heavy lift to restructure our agendas. I do not think we should choose the committees we are chairing based off which literal chair we want to sit in. I am not saying that is what you are doing, but that is what would be needed to avoid the heavy lift that Steve described. I do want you to know that we all respect your position here, no matter where you are sitting, you are respected.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- I would have to refer back to section 121 to look more closely at the wording on that, but we may have to change that whole ordinance because that lays out the same flow of committees in that ordinance as it does in the assignments and agendas.

Council Member, Ms. Hausfeld- Call me petty if you want, but when I was elected back in 2005, I was told that because I was a minority, I was told that I did not have a choice in the matter. The party that was in charge got to dictate where we would sit. Since there is no party in charge anymore, I have sat in one, in two, in three and so on, but I think I deserve a right to sit towards the end and stay on the same committee. So, if it takes retyping this to where Safety is at the end, then fine; Safety can be at the end. Call me petty if you want, but after almost 20 years of service, I think I deserve to be at the end or close to it. When I first was elected, I was not on the same committee every year. We would change committees every two years. I have done my fair share of the committees also. I don't mind staying on Safety, I like Safety. But I want it to be moved towards the end.

Auditor, Ms. Brickweg- So, is everyone on the same committee that they were on last election? Or the same chairs?

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- Yes.

Auditor, Ms. Brickweg- I would agree with Patty on that. It was always said they would be mixed up so everyone would have a chance to learn about each committee. That's how you know how each department works in the village. If you want to be a well-rounded chairman, you will want to learn the rest of the committees. So, I do agree with her about that.

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- I can agree with that too, but I don't want us to pick our chairs or committee based off what chair we would sit in up here. I don't think that is doing good service. However, if folks want to switch to a different committee, then let's do it. I just haven't gotten the impression that anyone wants to switch. But if you do, I think now is the time to voice that.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- Ok, let's do this, I will look a little deeper into section 121.10. Obviously, I am not going to be able to change that ordinance, so I'll come back with some findings and I'll get with the Committees on Committees and we will vote on something next week, but I will do the research, because if we have to change an entire ordinance just to move seats, there is no time to do that.

Auditor, Ms. Brickweg- You cannot get with the Committees on Committees due to the lawsuit we had. You, as President of Council cannot do that. Sorry, I am just trying to keep us out of another lawsuit.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- This is exactly why it has been done this way for years.

Auditor, Ms. Brickweg- Which is against the law.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- Ok well the Committees on Committees can meet this week and they can just decide.

Auditor, Ms. Brickweg- But if the Committees on Committees do meet, they have to announce it and make it a public meeting. That is what the lawsuit was based on, and we lost. So, let's not create another one.

Council Member, Mr. Schildmeyer- I'll just ask, is there anyone that does want to move committees? (no comment or answer) So, if it's appropriate, since I am on Committees of Committees, I would be happy to address the rules of seating with Valerie. Pending that, we can make a decision at the next meeting.

Auditor, Ms. Brickweg- Sorry, I just don't want to get sued again. I am sure they are probably watching for this. But let's do it right. It is an Ohio Sunshine Law. What they asked and what we agreed to is to just announce it and discuss it on TV so everyone can hear it and everyone can see it was discussed publicly.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- Well if someone can get me the committee assignments before December 1st so I can read it at Inauguration that would be wonderful.

Council Member, Mr. Schildmeyer- I can take the lead on that.

REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIALS

Mayor, Mr. Stuchell- Thank you Mr. President. The Village of St. Bernard was the recipient of a planning grant from Hamilton County for the Heritage Hill business district and has engaged Yard & Co. to guide us through this exciting process. We are pleased to be able to extend this community engagement portion of the process and would truly appreciate your involvement by completing the survey which is available on the village website and the link is available in the most recent newsletter. To date, we have over 50 responses in just a very short period of time, which has been fantastic. Future opportunities for the community will be announced, as we value your feedback in this process. We are asking the wonderful citizens of our community to please sign up for our new notification system. There is a tab on the village website titled alerts and notifications, click on that tab and it will task you to sign up for both emergency and community wide events. Currently, the system that we are using has no separation, and if you would prefer not to get the on-demand updates, you can opt for the minimal emergency text messages. Lastly, I want to thank the St. Bernard Police Department for their quick response to a shots fired call in the early morning hours on Broerman Avenue. One of our officers was able to get a partial plate on the vehicle and then a complete plate was recovered by camera. This vehicle was stopped in Springfield Twp. After a BOLO was issued and the suspects were arrested and charged. Thankfully no one was injured after shots were fired into the building, but our quick response, the use of modern technology, and the cooperative efforts of mutual aid agencies, these suspects were caught. Again, I couldn't be more proud of our police department and how this was handled.

Auditor, Ms. Brickweg- I am asking for an additional appropriations ordinance to be put on the table for the next council meeting. This would be Ordinance 30 2025. So, the Tax Department got an unexpected refund, so they need \$100,000 into 2-E-3. Please keep in mind that the tax department is not able to predict when a corporation will ask for their refund and not credit the funds. The other items are 2-L-1 for Civil Service for \$300 and 6-1-A-1 for Police Overtime in the amount of \$50,000. According to the chief, we brought in close to \$100,000 in police detail. We have been bringing in the money, but I have to pay it out also. The Fire Chief line item is running low, so we are adding \$4,000. I also go the quote from workers Comp at \$5,000 into O-1-6-1-A, and Master Plan for Contract Staff is running low, so I am asking for an additional \$10,000 for that. That concludes my report.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Moreton, to place Ordinance 30 2025 for additional appropriation on the table for the next council meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

Law Director, Ms. Van Valkenburg- Absent.

Treasurer, Ms. Darrenkamp- Thank you Mr. President. The Star Ohio balance as of October 2025 is \$10,523,218.89 and that concludes my report.

Safety and Service Director, Mr. Wendling- Thank you Mr. President. The finishing course of asphalt was applied to Greenlee Ave. today. Over the next several days, the contractor will be applying sealant to the edge of the asphalt where it meets the curb. Residents will need to make alternative parking arrangements until the work is completed. The second speed cushions will be installed on Langley Ave. sometime within the next few weeks. The village will provide notification once we have a definitive date. Capital Electric is in the process of testing the crosswalk signals at Vine and Church and at St. Clement School and Vine due to some recent concerns about their operation. They're also testing the timing of the traffic signal at Vine and Bertus. The Planning Commission met on November the 6th to consider several text amendments to the village's zoning ordinance. The Commission's recommendations will be presented for consideration by the Village Council in December. The village IT consultant has completed the process of testing the village's new domain address. Migration to the new domain will commence over the next few weeks. Staff will reach out to you with your updated e-mail address. The current e-mail address will be maintained as an alias which will enable people who have the current e-mail address to e-mail you as before, and the response will automatically convert to the new e-mail address. The updated domain is St. bernard-ohio.gov. The existing .org domain is not specific to government and does not provide the same level of verification, which is the reason for the migration. The .gov domain provides enhanced security, public trust and official recognition using .gov domain also makes it clear to the public that the village's website and emails are legitimate, verified government sources. Finally, it helps to prevent impersonation and phishing attempts. This concludes my report.

Tax Administrator, Ms. Helmes- Absent.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance, Mr. Moreton- Thank you, Mr. President. The Finance Committee met yesterday to discuss the draft of the 2026 budget. I would like to say thank you to Mayor Stuchell, Auditor Brickweg and Safety Service Director Wendling for preparing the budget and for walking the committee through its details. The next Finance Committee meeting is currently scheduled for December 17th at 6:00 PM in the lower level of City Hall. We currently plan to have a final committee discussion that's regarding the budget before it is presented to the new council. Of course, this is pending that it works with the committee's schedule. Separately, I would like to thank the county commissioners for hearing the concerns of school districts and other taxing districts like Saint Bernard and refusing to advance with the phony property tax relief known as the Homestead Piggyback. This saves our school district well over \$100,000 in crucial annual funding. So, I want to thank them for that. Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who volunteered this past election, whether as a poll worker or shuttle driver or a campaign volunteer. Your dedication to our democracy is appreciated. I am proud that the levy in both energy aggregation items passed, and I'm excited to hear a report from Energy Alliance on how they plan to save our residents money on their utility bills. Thank you that concludes my report.

Service, Mr. Stuchell- Thank you Mr. President. During the week of November 24th in observance of Thanksgiving, the trash recycling schedule will be just as follows: regular trash pickups on Monday and Tuesday, recycling pickups on Wednesday for all residents and businesses. No trash recycling pickup on Thursday or Friday as City Hall and the Service Department will be closed for the holiday. Additionally, reminder about leaf collection: if leaf piles remain at the curb for more than one day, please be patient with the service department. To prevent bottlenecks on our streets, the leafer operates on the off garbage routes. Because the leafer hose is fixed to only one side, the crew must run each route twice to collect leaves from both sides of the street. This may cause occasional delays, but it ensures that all residents are serviced. Also, residents on Greenlee Ave. are also asked to not place any leaves on the curb or verge at this time. The contractor is completing the final layer of asphalt, and any leaf piles they must remove will delay their work. Thank you, that concludes my report.

Public Improvements, Mr. Edwards- Thank you, Mr. President. There was no need for a Public Improvement Committee Meeting, but I would like to draw attention to a food drive being sponsored by St. Bernard-Elmwood Place School District. Because of ongoing food insecurity and the recent government shutdown, the school district is asking for those who can donate non-perishable goods that will be distributed to those in need. Donations can be dropped off at the high school office at 4615 Tower Ave. Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:30 am and 2:30 p.m. A variety of foods that will enable recipients to make a complete meal is appreciated. Donations are currently being accepted and will proceed as the need continues. Thank you, Mr. President this concludes my report.

Safety, Ms. Hausfeld- No report.

Laws, Contracts and Claims, Mr. Schildmeyer- No report.

Marketing, Mr. Culbertson- Thank you Mr. President. Saint Bernard's Christmas celebration will be on December 6th from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Stop by City Hall to enjoy the following activities: the tree lighting at 6:00 PM. Visit Santa and Mrs. Claus and get your picture taken with your own camera. Ride the trolleys and participate in the PAC light contest, visit the petting zoo and listen to Christmas carolers, grab cookies and hot chocolate in the main hall, check out the Fresh Market on Washington Ave. And check out the Queen City High Railer train display. The next St. Bernard Ludlow Grove Historical Society meeting will be on Monday the 19th at 7:00 PM. There will be a World War II program presented by Kat Lang. That concludes my report.

Business and Industry, Mr. Estep- Thank you Mr. President. There was no business and industry meeting, but I'd like to remind the people that December 11th will have our annual Christmas for needy children at the Eagles from 7pm to 11pm. Admission is \$20 and it includes refreshments and food, but we ask that you bring in a new unwrapped toy for a needy child and all the presents stay local. Thank you, that including my report.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- I know we are two days past Veterans Day, but a shout out and a big thank you to all the Veterans in St. Bernard and elsewhere. At this time, is there anyone in the audience wishing to address council this evening?

No audience participation.

The next council meeting will be held November 20th at 7pm in Council Chambers.

The inauguration meeting will be held on Monday, December 1st at 7pm in Council Chambers.

Motion made by Mr. Culbertson, seconded by Mr. Stuchell, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

Meeting is adjourned.