

Meeting Minutes of the Utilities, Safety & Environment Committee which held a meeting on Wednesday, March 18th, 2026 at 6:00 P.M.

[circulated March 24th, 2026]

Committee Members Present:

Utilities: Chair Mitchell, Davis, Oswald, Armstrong, Rothgery

Others:

Excused Absence:

Administration and Department Heads Present: Safety Service Dir Pyanowski, Law Dir Deery, Engineer Schneider

1. The matter of approval of meeting minutes from the Utilities, Safety & Environment Meeting which met, on March 4th, 2026, and circulated on March 18th, 2026.

Motion was made by Mr. Oswald and second by Mrs. Davis to approve the 'said' meeting minutes as circulated.

MOTION CARRIES

2. The matter of entering into a contract for the sale of water to Sheffield Village.

[This matter will also be discussed at The Finance Committee Meeting on March 30th, 2026].

Referred By: Director Pyanowski

Dir Pyanowski said he has been in conversations with Sheffield Village for many months. We have not previously sold them water but, they have a need to purchase from us and we have the capacity to provide it. We will need to make some infrastructure improvements to be able to deliver water to them. The infrastructure improvement will be a little more challenging and we will increase the amount we will sell them down the road, but, will start with a minimum amount and if they need additional, they'll buy from a secondary source. The contract with Sheffield Village will be a 30-year contract. The rates will be fair and we've agreed to most of the terms. They are ready to move forward to give the Mayor the authority to enter into this agreement. Sheffield Village had previously been getting their water from Lorain County Rural Water or Sheffield Lake.

Mr. Armstrong asked what will be the minimum amount of water purchased?

Dir Pyanowski said it's 243,984 hundred cubic feet. Sam Jacob has been putting this agreement together and they've met with Sheffield and they have been working out all of the parts of the agreement. This will be a good start to a new customer.

Mr. Armstrong said there is a sample ordinance from a recent agreement with Amherst and he asked if this will be similar?

Dir Pyanowski said each agreement is different regarding the terms and needs of that community and costs associated. They will take into consideration increased costs at the plant, infrastructure costs and operational costs in setting the rates for this contract.

Dir Deery said the Amherst agreement passed as an emergency and was a 20-year agreement and this one will be a 30-year agreement, so terms can be different. The template will be similar.

Dir Pyanowski said we currently sell water to Amherst, N Ridgeville and sometimes to LC Rural Water and there are factors that come into setting the terms of the contract. The terms could lock in a rate for the first couple of years to offset costs of infrastructure.

Mr. Oswald asked if we've gotten numbers for the infrastructure for the agreement with Sheffield Village?

Dir Pyanowski said there are 3 lines that will deliver the water to them. We will bring the water to Elyria through the normal system and turn around and send it back to Sheffield and it's downhill after Detroit Road. They will put in the vault and meter and pressure controller around the right-of-way around Panera near LCCC. So, that line will go down N Abbe toward Sheffield. The other will be at the old Fire Station, which is owned by Sheffield, at the corner of Gulf and Detroit. Since that property is owned by Sheffield, they will put in a vault, meter and pressure controller and a pipe will be installed from Ford Road to the vault. They don't have the particulars of this yet, there will be a line that goes under the Black River through the Metro Parks and Sheffield has an easement. They will have to replace that line and the cost for that is undetermined.

Mr. Oswald asked if the water tower will be able to keep up with the water pressure to that area?

Dir Pyanowski said we don't need a water tower to control the pressure for this sale. The pressure controls that will be installed are meant to reduce pressure as the water goes into their system. Our pumping plant and their water distribution people will monitor that. And we do have to be sensitive as to what the pressure in their system as compared to ours, so, we have considered that which is why we will install those pressure controls so that we don't cause issues on their end.

Mrs. Rothgery asked if we have a number of roughly what they use daily?

Dir Pyanowski said it's more than what we can provide right now. Once we get the two lines up and running, we will have a capacity of what we can actually deliver to them. Their needs are in excess of what we can actually provide to them at this time. They will supplement through their current provider, but, we will be the primary provider.

There were no further questions

Chair Mitchell read the committee report and asked for a motion.

Motion made by Mr. Oswald and second by Mr. Armstrong to authorize the Mayor to enter into a water purchase agreement with Sheffield Village for the sale of water from Elyria to Sheffield Village.

MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

This matter will also be discussed and voted on by Finance Committee on March 30th, 2026.

3. The matter of the Spring Valley Neighborhood Drainage Improvement Program.

[This matter will also be discussed at The Finance Committee Meeting on March 30th, 2026].

Referred By: Ward 4 Representative Oswald

Mr. Oswald said this conversation started 6 or 7 years ago. He was canvassing the area, running for council and couldn't get to some resident's doors because the water was so bad. He has been in constant discussions with the Engineering Dept., they are so busy with so many things and now will finally get this thing off the ground and at the point we're at right now and he will try to get the blessing of the people and an understanding of what is going on. When this moves to Finance, they can discuss how this could possibly be funded and what would be some ideas we can discuss and there will most likely have to be assessments on property owners.

When he had a meeting 3 or 4 years ago the residents were not happy that they were going to get assessed for this. Looking into this further we are going to keep the costs to a minimum. At this point we have to hire a consultant firm that would look at it and be able to break down what the costs would be. Mr. Oswald asked Engineer Schneider to explain the process for this.

Chair Mitchell asked Mr. Oswald that since the residents didn't want this 2 or 3 years ago, what makes him think they want it now.

Mr. Oswald said they don't want to pay, but, we are trying to make them understand that this was a development that was given to Elyria by the Township back in the 1950's and the development never had infrastructure. When someone buys a house in a development you pay for a house that already has the infrastructure for sewers and drains. We're now giving the infrastructure to the neighborhood.

Chair Mitchell said she understands, but we need to make sure that the residents are willing to accept the assessments before we take the time and effort to move forward on this project.

Engineer Schneider said the city has assessed properties for different things; curbs, sidewalks, storm sewers, things of that nature. Old neighborhoods had ditches on the side of the road. The Spring Valley area doesn't have storm sewers and the Engineering Dept hears it all the time, that those residents want storm water relief. Some residents are okay without the extra expense of curbs and sidewalks, but most residents want storm sewers because storm water is the main issue.

This process is up to council as to how to move forward. They would start preparing a plan to assess the residents, which would be a process, it won't happen all at once.

This will be a long-term project and residents would be assessed in phases. Part of the process will be an equalization board where a resident can dispute whether they are benefiting from this and discuss the process.

Typically, the assessment would go on for a number of years, which would be decided by council and it's decided and based on the useful life of what is being installed. The assessment can go as high as 30 years. When they ran the numbers, it was roughly \$10,000 per 50 feet of frontage, that's how the overall cost is based. And it would be roughly, just over \$500 per year if assessed for 20 years, if you go 30 years, it would be less than that.

There are a lot of storm sewers that chronically have INI, which is storm water getting into sanitary sewers which do go into resident's basements and still getting to the wastewater plant. So, by installing the storm sewer, it will benefit the wastewater system and not taxing it by adding the storm water that's getting into it. So there are benefits to both the residents as well as to the city.

So, it would be up to council to determine what improvements they want done, what areas they want improved and then move forward.

Mr. Armstrong asked Mr. Oswald when did he have discussions with the residents?

Mr. Oswald said, pretty much every time it rains and that's when he gets calls. This problem will not fix itself because there is no where for the water to go. Once the project is finished, it will increase values to those properties. Some residents can't get insurance because they've had so many claims on flooding. When someone sells a house, they have to add a disclaimer that says they have flooding in the area.

Dir Deery said State Law sets forth the process of what a city would have to go through in order to undertake this kind of project, with intention of placing special assessments. The approach would be to look at the front footage of the property to calculate the assessment. There are 2 other ways; it could be calculated, the tax value of the property assessed and the other is in proportion to the benefits that may result the front footage of the property bounding and assuming the improvement is the most straightforward way to do it. There is a series of legislation that does need to be passed by council before we would delve into this. There's a series of preliminary questions that would need to be addressed. What would be the time frame, what streets would be assessed. This would be a project which would take many years, will be long term. There would be a series of decisions that the committee would have to make, as well as the finance committee and council as a whole. The issue for finance committee would be how to fund the improvements and how would the city front the money? The finance director would have to consider bonds. Some of the money would come from the storm water fund, which would be an appropriate use for that fund. The assessment would be for reimbursement of the money to do the project. If it's a 30-year assessment, that money would come back to the city after 30 years.

Mr. Oswald said we do have money in the storm water fund which could pay for a consultant. Could we get the blessing to go ahead and spend the money for that?

Dir Deery said depending on what that amount is, a referral could be made to enter into a contract for a consultant and the money could be appropriated for that.

Dir Pyanowski said that a conversation would need to take place with the administration to explore it a little more before they commit to something like that.

Mr. Armstrong said there are too many things to really consider before they vote on this. Should the matter be tabled?

Chair Mitchell said she thinks it's a bit premature for this to even go to Finance. She asked Dir Pyanowski what his thoughts are and if this should go to the next Finance Committee meeting?

Dir Pyanowski said his opinion is that it does seem that way, he would like to have that conversation first, but the referral has been made and that's not his call to make.

Dir Deery said the referral does need to be addressed in some way by the Finance Committee within 30 days of the referral. It may be a matter of Finance addressing it and tabling it.

Mrs. Davis said she has friends in that area and she hopes that council and the city come to some kind of help for those residents.

Mr. Oswald said he wants to keep the ball rolling and it's a good suggestion to meet with the administration to see if we can come to some terms. He said he wished Mr. Armstrong could go with him when he meets with residents after a rainstorm and see them in boots and canoes and can't get out of their driveways.

Chair Mitchell said since we aren't voting, it would be her recommendation that we table this matter until a later date and once the administration has had their discussions. She assured that the matter won't be forgotten.

Chair Mitchell said that concluded this discussion and she asked for a motion for adjournment.

**Mr. Armstrong moved to adjourn the Utilities, Safety & Environment Committee Meeting and that motion was seconded by Mr. Oswald and the meeting adjourned at 6:35 P.M.
MOTION CARRIES**

The next scheduled meeting of the Utilities, Safety & Environment Committee will be held on Wednesday, April 8th, 2026 at 6:00 P.M.

*Respectfully Submitted by,
Colleen Rosado, Council Secretary/Administrative Assistant*