

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Finance and Appropriations Committee Meeting

June 1, 2026

Members: Mary Nichols-Rhodes, Chair
Mike Brillhart, Vice Chair
Brian Ashton, Joe Siegferth, Susan Spinner

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the May 18, 2026 Finance Committee meeting were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed

Temp. Ord. A-38

Temp. Ord. A-39

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. A-38

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, with LiveEO, Inc., for the use of satellite imagery to monitor vegetation growth around power lines, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Felon, Electric, presented Temporary Ordinance A-38 to Council. The Electric Department will be utilizing satellite imagery to monitor vegetation growth around power lines. The Electric Department will use feedback from this monitoring to work with line clearance contractors to proactively trim vegetation. The Electric Department will benefit from this service by reducing electric outages. The Electric Department has contracted with LiveEO, Inc. to successfully pilot this program.

The Director of Public Service will be authorized to enter into a contract or contracts, with LiveEO, Inc., for the use of satellite imagery to monitor vegetation growth around power lines. 33 The Director of Finance will be authorized to make payment for same from the Electric Fund, Line Item Other Operations.

Mr. Jimmy Filon, Assistant Electric Superintendent, stated that this a new and innovative approach to vegetation management for electrical outages. The company is out of Berlin, Germany. They use satellite imagery to predict whether there's going to be an issue with grow -in or decay of trees.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes stated that this is for a three-year contract for \$158,068 coming out of Electric, Other Operations. This will hopefully prevent electric outages due to trees by being proactive.

Mr. Filon stated that the longer they use it, the more it can predict. The first year, they cannot predict a lot because they have nothing to gauge it against. They are asking for a three-year contract, so they can see, over a span of years, how the trees are growing and how they are

Finance and Appropriations Committee
June 1, 2026 – Page 2

decaying. They look for three things: grow-in risk, fall-in risk for trees that are decaying that can fall on the lines and bring them down and hazard trees, which they would then have the city arborist go out and inspect to see if they actually are a risk.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes asked what other departments are using it for. Mr. Filon stated that Davey Tree is very amicable to this program. Mr. Passarelli, the arborist, has been using a program called Tree Keeper through Davey Tree that inventories every single city tree. They are working on a way to merge these two programs together so they can take inventory of city trees, use the LiveEO, and see how the trees are doing. They are going to be very proactive in their approach to tree trimming. The city of Westerville has been using this program for years and cut their vegetation outages by almost 40 percent.

Mr. Stams asked what LIDAR is. Mr. Filon stated that LIDAR is light detection. They use a laser beam from an airplane to check the height of vegetation and structures. LIDAR is one way to do it, but it just that one snapshot, whereas this can actually predict growth and decay of trees. Cuyahoga Falls has over 350 miles of electrical lines, they were able to look at 181 miles through satellite imagery in a matter of a month or two.

Mr. Balthis stated that anything they can do to reduce outages is really appreciated. The fact that they can use satellites to get this level of accuracy is incredible. He asked what percentage of outages are caused by some sort of tree, either growth or a dying tree, which fell on the lines. Mr. Filon stated that trees account for the majority of outages. Another aspect of this program is that they will also be to know what species of trees are around the city so they can predict different diseases that affect trees.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes stated that she had asked Mr. Filon earlier if all the inquiries in this system were internal and was told that the only people with access would be him, the arborist, Davey Tree and the engineering technicians.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes asked if there were any comments or questions from the public. There were none.

Mr. Brillhart moved to bring out Temp. Ord. A-38 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mrs. Spinner. Motion passed (5-0).

Temp. Ord. A-39

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the Nutwood Avenue Sanitary Sewer Improvements, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Tony Demasi, City Engineer, presented Temporary Ordinance A-39 to Council. Section 1. The Director of Public Service will be authorized to enter into a contract or contracts, according to

Finance and Appropriations Committee
June 1, 2026 – Page 3

law, for the Nutwood Avenue Sanitary Sewer Improvements. The Director of Finance will be authorized to make payment for same from the Sanitary Sewer Fund, Line Item Capital Outlay.

Mr. Demasi stated that due to backups and the age of the infrastructure, the sewer department asked Engineering to work with them to design a project to improve the sanitary sewers on Nutwood Street and Ashton Avenue. The sewers in this part of town were built in 1917. The improvements will include replacing the sewer on Nutwood Street with 8-inch PVC pipe. Because of the proximity of fences and structures on Ashton Avenue, including the sound wall for the expressway, it will be much easier to simply line it in place as opposed to tear it out and replace. Design for the replacement was completed earlier this year and final plans were recently bid. They received two bids with HM Miller being the lowest and best bid. HM Miller is from Mogadore, Ohio and have done several projects for the City. Work is scheduled to begin later this year, probably in the fall, and be complete by the spring of this year.

Ms. Nichol-Rhodes stated that the total estimated cost for this is \$640,000. She asked what the bid was from HM Miller. Mr. Demasi stated that it was \$639,196.68, just \$13 dollars below the estimated cost.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes asked if there were any comments or questions from the public. There were none.

Mr. Brillhart moved to bring out Temp. Ord. A-39 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mrs. Spinner. Motion passed (5-0).

The meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.