

COUNCIL MINUTES

April 20, 2026

The Archbold Village Council met in regular session on Monday, April 20th, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers with the following members present: Gary Dominique, Mike Evans, Kevin Eicher, Aaron Babcock, Chad Kern, and Karla Ball. Mayor Brad Grime opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silent prayer and presided thereat.

There being no corrections to the minutes of the April 6, 2026 Council meeting, Kevin Eicher moved to approve, seconded by Aaron Babcock.

Roll: Yeas: Babcock, Kern, Dominique, Evans, Eicher

Abstain: Ball

Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Following a review of the list of bills and payroll totaling \$721,259.91, Karla Ball moved to approve, seconded by Chad Kern.

Roll: Yeas: Dominique, Evans, Eicher, Babcock, Kern Ball

Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Mayor Grime then presented the following items of legislation:

RESOLUTION 2026-17: A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE BID FROM S&S DIRECTIONAL BORING LTD. FOR CONTRACT 2-2026, SANITARY SEWER INTERCEPTOR PHASE I AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

After brief explanation of the project and the efforts taken to reduce costs, Aaron Babcock moved to suspend the rule that requires a resolution of general nature to be read on three separate days. Chad Kern seconded the motion.

Roll: Yeas: Kern, Ball, Dominique, Evans, Eicher, Babcock

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Kevin Eicher moved to pass Resolution 2026-17, seconded by Karla Ball.

Roll: Yeas: Babcock, Kern, Ball, Dominique, Evans, Eicher

Nays: None. **Resolution 2026-17 passed.**

RESOLUTION 2026-18: A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A BID FROM GERKEN PAVING INC. FOR CONTRACT 3-2026, MISCELLANEOUS STREET RESURFACING, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

After brief discussion, Mike Evans moved to suspend the rule that requires a resolution of general nature to be read on three separate days. Gary Dominique seconded the motion.

Roll: Yeas: Eicher, Babcock, Kern, Ball, Dominique, Evans

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Kevin Eicher moved to pass Resolution 2026-18, seconded by Mike Evans.

Roll: Yeas: Babcock, Kern, Ball, Dominique, Evans, Eicher

Nays: None. **Resolution 2026-18 passed.**

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RESOLUTION 2026-19: *PUBLIC HEARING: A RESOLUTION APPROVING FOUR (4) PARCELS FOR RENEWAL OF FARMLAND IN THE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT DESIGNATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.*

With the Public Hearing Requirement met, Aaron Babcock moved to suspend the rule that requires a resolution of general nature to be read on three separate days. Mike Evans seconded the motion.

Roll: Yeas: Kern, Ball, Dominique, Evans, Eicher, Babcock

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Chad Kern moved to pass Resolution 2026-19, seconded by Gary Dominique

Roll: Yeas: Ball, Dominique, Evans, Eicher, Babcock, Kern

Nays: None. **Resolution 2026-19 passed.**

There were no Committee, Board & Department Reports to review.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: President of the Archbold Community Garden, Abby Pennington, was present to update Council on the growth the Community Garden in light of the upcoming lease renewal. Her presentation included the revised constitution and highlights from the Pre-Season Meeting which is also available on their website and social media. Revisions to the constitution included leadership changes, new communication platforms, updated gift acceptance policy, and committee consolidations. The Pre-Season Meeting slides reviewed the garden's vision, strategies, and projects accomplished in the past three years and shared upcoming events, fundraisers, and project goals for the 2026 growing season like the Community Blossom Bash on May 31st, Sprouting Explorers Story Hour, and Pathway Project.

Council inquired where the participants for programs and events came from. Most participants are Archbold and Fulton County locals, but some of the classes have drawn people from as far as Troy, Ohio and Defiance, Ohio.

Council asked for clarification on the time and date of the Blossom Bash. The Blossom Bash is Sunday, May 31st from 5-7pm. (Originally quoted as 5:30-7:30 but was later corrected to 5-7.) Normal operating hours for the Garden are from dawn to dusk. This means that the concert event will end roughly an hour before dark. In efforts to be a good neighbor, Abby informs the condo association in advance of larger or louder work projects and events.

Council then asked for more information about the Pathway Project. The path will be made from crushed stone, similar in sturdiness to concrete but more natural looking. The funds were raised in the 2025 growing season. Half of the deposit has been made with the remaining half to be paid upon completion. Weather delayed the project last winter, but now the goal is to start next week, again weather pending.

Council asked about the 2026 gazebo project. Abby has consulted with Zoning Inspector Grant Schaffner on the gazebo. The best location is the southeast corner. A tree would need to be relocated and ACG would take care not to create blind spots for those using the alley. The size of the gazebo is roughly 12x16. If approved, it will be the 3rd and final structure allowed on the property per zoning regulations.

The Mayor asked if there had been a cleanup day at the garden yet. None yet, but two are scheduled with partnering student groups in the next two weeks. The spring rains

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do make scheduling work days and mowing more difficult, but planting and routine maintenance will begin May 17th.

ACG welcomes all feedback. Abby and any of the committee member volunteers are more than willing to have conversations, listen to complaints, and work with the community to brainstorm how the garden can continue to serve and contribute to the beauty of Archbold.

Abby then listened and responded to the public about their concerns regarding the mural and lights, the possible gazebo, the overall aesthetics, the Blossom Bash music volume, and winter maintenance. She encouraged everyone to notify the garden if they ever see anything amiss such as the case of fallen lattice earlier this spring. If neighbors or parkgoers notice something wrong, all they need to do is contact ACG and they will send a committee member over to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. The garden strives to be a good neighbor and follow all zoning regulations.

Councilman Mike Evans asked who regulates the Garden. Because committees have changed since the original lease, ACG answers directly to Council.

Councilman Aaron Babcock was curious if the Garden had ever considered moving to a different location or if it seems they may be outgrowing the current one. No, with the countless hours put into the current location and such overwhelming support and investment from local people within the community, it would be incredibly difficult and disheartening to have to move. The garden has met every single goal from the initial presentation to Council 3 years ago. Completing said goals in such a short time has only been possible because the local community has so generously supported the garden as it has worked to implement its vision and mission. The ACG presentation concluded with President Abby thanking Council for their time and support.

Mayor Grime then transitioned to New Business for the purpose of a Work Session to review and discuss Draft Zoning Amendments (Data Centers). With the members of Planning Commission also present, the goal is to present the two basic options and decide the direction Council and Planning Commission want to take. This is the first rough draft of many to come before the official amendment goes before Planning Commission. Option 1 is a full ban and option 2 is a strict conditional use.

Councilman Chad Kern is against the full prohibition, stating that other municipalities who have gone that route have been sued immediately. Councilwoman Karla Ball seconds this opinion. Councilman Mike Evans has been for conditional use from the beginning. Planning & Zoning Inspector Grant Schaffner noted that as the State completes their studies on data centers, the Village can also adjust their zoning draft as more information comes out. It is a fluid process and the drafts before Council tonight are by no means the final copy.

Councilwoman Ball asked if anyone was concerned by the language in the conditional use draft under Item 1, high technology manufacturing facility. The way it reads might restrict other non-data center business already in town or make Archbold seem less attractive to new industry that the Village would actually welcome. Kevin Baez, Planning Commission, asked if a business that aligns more with Archbold's vision would need 75 acres as per the restriction. Vaughn Bentz, Planning Commission, and Councilman Evans agree that they would not want to limit desired CNC manufacturing companies. Schaffner shared a file that showed within the Village, only Sauders goes above 75 acres and that is

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across all its facilities. The characterization of “continuous high load of energy consumption, large scale mechanical cooling or heating system” should differentiate it from a grassroots CNC operation. He also stated that everything is still subject to review and change between work sessions, legal, and officially bringing it before Planning Commission. Alt stated that there is a balance to be found between making Archbold appealing to new industry and protecting the Village from unwanted businesses. He shared an example of two local businessmen concerned about being approved for financing because of the zoning being interpreted by the bank as restrictive.

Councilman Kern and Kevin Baez discussed the source of employees for new or expanding businesses. Kern is for growth but does not see where a facility will find 400 general labor employees and is concerned that they would try to bus workers from other areas. Baez countered that his company Napoleon Spring Works, while on the lower end of Archbold’s wage spectrum, doesn’t seem to be struggling to find workers. Baez agreed that turnover is inevitable, but if the wage is right, Archbold residents who work outside of town would be willing to leave their current jobs to work within town.

Vaughn Bentz pointed out a small proofreading error that bullet point a. should be b.

Councilman Kern restated that the agreed goal is that we do not want a data center type facility. What Schaffner and Alt have presented is a good start, but there are areas that need to be expanded upon such as the lighting and environmental concerns. Councilman Gary Dominique raised concern how that could impact already established businesses. Preexisting businesses could be grandfathered in.

Schaffner warned that intent does not matter once the paper is finalized. Placing certain analysis on specific development types such as advanced manufacturing could be seen as cherry-picking and is almost always successfully challenged. Councilwoman Ball asked if they should be more vague in the wording then, but Schaffner clarified that wasn’t necessarily the answer.

Marty Mayor shared his hope that Council will seek the advice of attorneys with specific knowledge and experience with fighting data centers. Councilman Kern is also in favor of seeking specialized legal counsel outside of the Village’s usual firm. Schaffner stressed the importance of realistic expectations should they choose to consult specialized attorneys. A realistic timeline for working up a draft to then be sent, reviewed, and returned from a specialist is going to be at least 4 months, if not longer. For that draft to go then go before Planning Commission will be an additional month and that is pushing against the deadline of the moratorium. The moratorium can be extended if needed, but this is not a process that will have a quick turnover and expectations need to be adjusted accordingly.

Abby Pennington asked what the foundation was of this first rough draft. The conditional use standards already in the zoning code are the base of the draft. They then looked at what applied to data centers and took notes on what was missing. They have researched what has and has not been successful in other communities and then tailored those to Archbold’s specific numbers and stats. This draft is more of an outline than the full detailed final amendment.

Sarah Cromly asked if there was anything in the draft about air, noise, or light pollution. No, for all commercial properties, the Village defers to the EPA and Wood County Building Inspections because the Village does not have the capacity for residential or commercial inspection. It is owner’s responsibility to ensure that the builder or installation

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crew comply with Ohio Building Code. Cromly suggested Council consider setting stricter standards than the federal EPA as to make it unappealing to build a data center near Archbold.

Council then discussed the RGP data center meeting recently held at Northwest State. Councilman Kern shared that it was stated in the meeting that they don't want to go where they aren't welcome, but if the zoning isn't properly in place, then they will do as they please. He also shared that the meeting made data centers very appealing. RGP has brought many good businesses to the area, but that is not what they are focusing on anymore.

Baez asked to look at section I Findings Required for Approval. He believes that is where the power can be given back to the Village and its residents for what is and is not allowed in the Village.

In the discussion of environmental and health impacts and regulations, Kim Murry expressed her concerns about the lack of regulation for the temporary diesel generators often used by data centers. If the zoning code included language that restricted or prohibited the pollution the generators create, it could discourage data centers from wanting to come to the area.

Cromly suggested adding a clause to the ordinance to include property values as a consideration for accepting or denying a permit.

Councilwoman Ball then ended the work session with a summary of the progress made. Council has heard and appreciates the public's concerns. They have the moratorium in place to protect the Village until the new zoning amendment is ready. Council agrees to proceed with the conditional use revision and not the hard ban. They will hire an expert attorney to guide and review once a more concrete draft is ready with the environmental and health protections included with the knowledge that it will take many months to complete.

Mayor and Council comments included Councilman Gary Dominique asking for an update on the Memorial Park Memorial. The site is ready and the memorial stones prepared, but the weather has delayed its completion date beyond Memorial Day. The Memorial Day service will be held at the K of C Hall.

Councilman Chad Kern asked about the hole on the other side of the tracks. It is on Gerken's radar to address in the next couple of weeks as well as a few other patches that need fixed.

There being no further business to discuss, Kevin Eicher moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Aaron Babcock. All agreed; meeting adjourned.

Council President

Mayor

Clerk