

FIRST READING -

COUNCIL NO.

SECOND READING -

SPONSOR: Councilman Jon Morrow Ward 1-A

THIRD READING -

RESOLUTION NO.

SHORT TITLE - COUNCIL POLICY GOVERNANCE ACT

CITY OF SHEFFIELD LAKE, OHIO

RESOLUTION NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE RULES OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SHEFFIELD LAKE BY ADOPTING NEW RULE NO. 53 ENTITLED "COUNCIL POLICY GOVERNANCE"; ESTABLISHING A PERMANENT SYSTEM FOR THE ADOPTION, CLASSIFICATION, ADMINISTRATION, REVIEW, AMENDMENT, SUSPENSION, REPEAL, PUBLICATION, AND INDEXING OF OFFICIAL COUNCIL POLICIES; CREATING THE OFFICIAL COUNCIL POLICY REGISTER; ESTABLISHING STANDARDIZED POLICY FORMATS AND NUMBERING; DEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COUNCIL POLICIES, ORDINANCES, CHARTER PROVISIONS, AND COUNCIL RULES; PROVIDING FOR PERIODIC REVIEW; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; AUTHORIZING NONSUBSTANTIVE TECHNICAL REVISIONS BY THE LAW DIRECTOR; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING RULES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND DECLARING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, The Charter of the City of Sheffield Lake vests the legislative authority of the Municipality in City Council and authorizes Council to organize itself and prescribe rules governing the conduct of its proceedings; and

WHEREAS, effective municipal government depends not only upon the enactment of laws but also upon the adoption of consistent legislative policies that guide decision-making, establish administrative expectations, preserve institutional knowledge, and promote transparency; and

WHEREAS, City Council finds that many matters affecting the governance of municipal operations do not require enactment by ordinance because they neither regulate the public nor establish criminal or civil penalties, yet nevertheless warrant formal legislative direction; and

WHEREAS, Council further finds that the absence of an organized policy system may lead to inconsistent administrative practices, unnecessary duplication of effort, uncertainty regarding legislative intent, and the loss of valuable institutional knowledge as elected officials and municipal employees change over time; and

WHEREAS, Council desires to distinguish between municipal laws enacted by ordinance, internal Rules of Council governing legislative procedure, and official Council Policies intended to provide continuing

legislative guidance on matters of governance, administration, financial management, strategic planning, and internal controls; and

WHEREAS, Council further finds that maintaining an indexed and publicly accessible Register of Council Policies will improve transparency, accountability, continuity of government, and public understanding of legislative expectations; and

WHEREAS, Council recognizes that sound internal control systems, documented administrative expectations, standardized operating policies, and periodic policy review are widely recognized principles of effective public administration and responsible municipal governance; and

WHEREAS, Council desires to establish a uniform system for adopting, organizing, numbering, publishing, reviewing, amending, suspending, and repealing Council Policies while preserving the authority of future Councils to modify those policies through established legislative procedures; and

WHEREAS, Council further finds that Council Policies should not supersede the Ohio Constitution, the Ohio Revised Code, the Sheffield Lake Charter, the Codified Ordinances, or the Rules of Council, but should instead provide guidance and direction consistent with those authorities; and

WHEREAS, Council finds that the adoption of a formal Council Policy Governance System will promote continuity across successive administrations, strengthen legislative oversight, improve internal controls, encourage consistent municipal administration, and provide future Councils with an organized framework for documenting legislative policy that does not require enactment by ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Sheffield Lake, State of Ohio:

SECTION 1.

ADOPTION OF NEW RULE NO. 53.

The Rules of Council of the City of Sheffield Lake are hereby amended by adopting new Rule No. 53, entitled:

RULE NO. 53

COUNCIL POLICY GOVERNANCE

(A) Purpose.

This Rule is adopted pursuant to Article IV of the Charter for the purpose of establishing a permanent system for the adoption, administration, publication, amendment, suspension, repeal, indexing, and periodic review of official Council Policies.

Council finds that effective municipal government requires more than the enactment of ordinances. It further requires the adoption of consistent legislative policies that preserve institutional knowledge, establish legislative expectations, improve administrative consistency, strengthen internal controls, and provide long-term continuity in municipal governance.

Accordingly, this Rule establishes the Council Policy Governance System as a permanent component of the legislative framework of the City of Sheffield Lake.

(B) Legislative Intent.

Council hereby finds and declares:

- (1) Not every matter requiring legislative guidance requires enactment by ordinance.
- (2) Numerous governmental functions are administrative, procedural, operational, strategic, or supervisory in nature and are more appropriately addressed through formally adopted Council Policies.
- (3) Council Policies provide continuity between successive Councils and municipal administrations.
- (4) Council Policies promote transparency, accountability, consistency, and sound public administration.
- (5) Council Policies establish legislative expectations without unnecessarily increasing the number of municipal ordinances.
- (6) Council Policies may establish standards, objectives, internal controls, administrative expectations, governance practices, reporting requirements, strategic priorities, and operational guidance consistent with existing law.
- (7) Council Policies shall not create criminal offenses, civil penalties, taxes, licensing requirements, appropriations, or other matters required by the Charter or Ohio law to be enacted by ordinance.
- (8) Council Policies are intended to complement—not replace—the Charter, ordinances, resolutions, and Rules of Council.
- (9) Council Policies should be written in a clear, standardized, and organized format that facilitates public understanding and long-term administrative consistency.
- (10) Council Policies should be periodically reviewed to ensure they remain relevant, effective, and consistent with evolving legal requirements and municipal needs.

(C) Nature of Council Policies.

Council Policies constitute official expressions of legislative policy.

They are intended to guide municipal governance, legislative oversight, administrative expectations, financial stewardship, internal controls, strategic planning, and other governmental functions that do not require enactment by ordinance.

Council Policies are legislative in nature but are not municipal laws.

Accordingly, they shall not be construed as creating private causes of action or independent legal rights unless expressly authorized by ordinance or other applicable law.

(D) Relationship to Other Legislative Authority.

The authority established by this Rule is intended to supplement the legislative authority granted by the Charter.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed as limiting Council's authority to enact ordinances, adopt resolutions, amend the Rules of Council, conduct investigations, exercise oversight, or otherwise perform the legislative functions assigned by the Charter.

(E) Guiding Principles.

Council Policies shall be developed in accordance with the following principles:

1. transparency;
2. accountability;
3. consistency;
4. simplicity;
5. fiscal responsibility;
6. effective internal controls;
7. professional public administration;
8. long-term institutional continuity;
9. public accessibility;
10. periodic review and continuous improvement.

(F) Scope.

Unless otherwise prohibited by the Charter or the Ohio Revised Code, Council Policies may address any matter affecting the governance, administration, operation, oversight, planning, reporting, management, or internal control of the municipal government that does not require enactment by ordinance.

SECTION 2.

DEFINITIONS AND HIERARCHY OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE.

(A) Definitions.

For purposes of this Rule, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings ascribed to them unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

(1) Council Policy.

A written statement formally adopted by City Council establishing legislative expectations, governance standards, administrative direction, financial controls, strategic objectives, internal control standards, operational guidance, or other governmental policies that do not require enactment by ordinance.

Council Policies are legislative expressions of policy and guidance and shall not constitute municipal law unless expressly incorporated into an ordinance.

(2) Council Policy Register.

The official indexed record maintained by the Clerk of Council containing every Council Policy currently in effect together with historical amendments, repeals, suspensions, review dates, classifications, and related information required by this Rule.

(3) Administrative Manual.

A written manual adopted or maintained by the appropriate executive official describing the procedures used to implement Council Policies, ordinances, or executive administrative policies.

Administrative Manuals shall be consistent with the Charter, ordinances, Rules of Council, and Council Policies.

(4) Internal Control.

A policy, procedure, or administrative practice designed to safeguard public assets, improve operational effectiveness, ensure legal compliance, reduce fraud, improve accountability, or strengthen municipal governance.

(5) Policy Classification.

The category assigned to each Council Policy according to the subject matter governed by the Policy.

(6) Policy Number.

The unique identifying designation assigned to each Council Policy in accordance with the numbering system established by this Rule.

(B) Hierarchy of Municipal Governance.

Council hereby establishes the following hierarchy of municipal governing authority.

Whenever two municipal governing documents appear inconsistent, the document appearing higher in this hierarchy shall control unless otherwise required by law.

The hierarchy shall be:

Level 1

United States Constitution

Level 2

Ohio Constitution

Level 3

Ohio Revised Code

Level 4

Charter of the City of Sheffield Lake

Level 5

Codified Ordinances of the City of Sheffield Lake

Level 6

Rules of Council

Level 7

Official Council Policies

Level 8

Executive Administrative Policies

Level 9

Administrative Manuals

Level 10

Department Procedures

Level 11

Forms, Checklists, Standard Operating Procedures, Technical Specifications, and Work Instructions.

(C) Effect of Hierarchy.

No Council Policy may:

1. conflict with the United States Constitution;
2. conflict with the Ohio Constitution;
3. conflict with the Ohio Revised Code;
4. conflict with the Sheffield Lake Charter;
5. amend, repeal, or supersede any ordinance;
6. amend the Rules of Council except as expressly authorized by ordinance.

Whenever a conflict exists, the higher governing authority shall prevail.

(D) Relationship Between Policies and Procedures.

Council Policies establish **what** municipal government expects to be accomplished.

Administrative Manuals establish **how** those expectations are implemented.

Department Procedures establish the detailed operational steps necessary to implement Administrative Manuals.

Work Instructions, forms, checklists, templates, and technical documents provide day-to-day operational guidance supporting those procedures.

(E) Presumption of Consistency.

Every Council Policy adopted under this Rule shall be presumed to be consistent with the Charter and the Codified Ordinances unless expressly determined otherwise by subsequent legislation or a court of competent jurisdiction.

Whenever reasonably possible, Council Policies shall be interpreted in a manner that harmonizes them with higher governing authorities rather than creating conflict.

SECTION 3.

MUNICIPAL POLICY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM.

(A) Purpose.

To promote consistency, organization, transparency, and long-term institutional continuity, every Council Policy shall be assigned to an official Policy Classification established by this Rule.

The Policy Classification System shall serve as the organizational framework for the Official Council Policy Register.

The Clerk of Council shall organize all adopted policies according to these classifications unless otherwise directed by subsequent ordinance.

(B) Official Policy Classifications.

The following classifications are hereby established.

LEG — Legislative Administration

Policies governing:

- legislative procedure;
- agenda preparation;
- committee operations;
- legislative drafting;
- parliamentary practices;
- legislative oversight;
- Council administration;
- public participation;
- legislative records.

GOV — Governance and Ethics

Policies concerning:

- ethics;
- conflicts of interest;
- transparency;
- accountability;
- governmental integrity;
- board appointments;
- advisory committees;
- citizen engagement;
- governmental organization.

FIN — Financial Management and Internal Controls

Policies governing:

- purchasing;
- procurement;
- budgeting;
- investments;
- internal auditing;
- financial reporting;
- grants;
- accounts payable;
- accounts receivable;
- banking;
- cash handling;
- inventory control;
- asset protection.

ADM — Municipal Administration

Policies relating to:

- administrative organization;
- departmental reporting;
- document management;
- records administration;
- municipal operations;
- interdepartmental coordination;
- service delivery.

HR — Human Resources

Policies concerning:

- employee expectations;
- training;
- professional development;
- performance evaluation;
- workplace conduct;
- equal employment opportunity;
- succession planning;
- employee recognition.

IT — Information Technology

Policies governing:

- cybersecurity;
- electronic records;
- software;
- hardware;
- artificial intelligence;
- data governance;
- digital communications;
- information security.

RSK — Risk Management

Policies relating to:

- insurance;
- continuity of government;
- emergency management;
- disaster recovery;
- safety;
- fraud prevention;
- enterprise risk management;
- legal risk reduction.

FAC — Facilities and Municipal Assets

Policies concerning:

- municipal buildings;
- fleet management;
- capital assets;
- equipment replacement;

- maintenance standards;
- physical security.

INF — Infrastructure and Public Works

Policies relating to:

- streets;
- sidewalks;
- drainage;
- utilities;
- engineering;
- capital improvement planning;
- infrastructure management.

PARK — Parks and Recreation

Policies concerning:

- parks;
- recreation;
- accessibility;
- park planning;
- recreational programming;
- park maintenance;
- community facilities.

UTL — Utilities

Policies governing:

- water;
- sanitary sewer;
- stormwater;
- utility billing;
- enterprise funds;
- utility infrastructure.

STR — Strategic Planning

Policies concerning:

- economic development;
- downtown revitalization;
- housing;

- long-range planning;
- community development;
- municipal goals;
- performance measurement.

PUB — Public Information and Transparency

Policies governing:

- public records;
- websites;
- communications;
- citizen notifications;
- publications;
- media relations;
- open government.

SAF — Public Safety Oversight

Policies concerning:

- police oversight;
- fire services;
- emergency medical services;
- emergency preparedness;
- public safety planning;
- community risk reduction.

ENV — Environmental Stewardship

Policies concerning:

- sustainability;
- forestry;
- parks ecology;
- stormwater quality;
- recycling;
- environmental protection;
- natural resources.

(C) Future Classifications.

City Council may establish additional classifications by subsequent Policy or ordinance whenever necessary to improve the organization of municipal governance.

(D) Multiple Classifications.

Where a Policy addresses multiple subject areas, the Clerk of Council shall assign the classification representing the Policy's primary purpose.

Cross-references may be included within the Council Policy Register for additional subject classifications.

(E) Reserved Number Series.

To preserve future organizational flexibility, Council may reserve blocks of Policy Numbers for future use.

Reserved numbers shall not affect the validity of existing Policies.

(F) Legislative Intent.

Council finds that standardized classifications improve:

1. transparency;
2. public accessibility;
3. legislative organization;
4. policy research;
5. administrative consistency;
6. institutional memory;
7. future codification;
8. long-term governance.

Accordingly, these classifications shall become the permanent organizational framework for the Official Council Policy Register.

SECTION 4.

CLASSIFICATION OF COUNCIL POLICIES BY LEGAL EFFECT.

(A) Purpose.

Council finds that not every legislative policy is intended to have the same operational effect.

Some policies establish mandatory expectations governing municipal administration or legislative operations.

Others express long-term legislative objectives, best practices, strategic priorities, or recommendations intended to guide future decision-making.

Accordingly, Council establishes two classes of Council Policies based upon their intended legal and administrative effect.

(B) Directive Policies.

A Directive Policy establishes an official legislative expectation governing municipal administration, internal controls, financial practices, legislative operations, reporting requirements, governance standards, or other municipal functions within the authority of City Council.

Directive Policies shall ordinarily employ words such as:

- shall;
- must;
- is required;
- will;
- shall not.

Directive Policies are intended to provide binding legislative direction to municipal officers, departments, boards, commissions, employees, or Council itself to the extent authorized by the Charter, ordinances, collective bargaining agreements, and applicable law.

Directive Policies shall not create criminal penalties, civil liability, private causes of action, or obligations enforceable by persons outside municipal government unless otherwise provided by ordinance.

(C) Guidance Policies.

A Guidance Policy expresses Council's legislative philosophy, strategic priorities, planning objectives, recommended best practices, long-term goals, or advisory recommendations.

Guidance Policies should ordinarily employ words such as:

- should;
- encourages;
- strives;
- recommends;
- supports;
- seeks to;
- whenever reasonably practicable.

Guidance Policies are intended to guide future legislative and administrative decision-making while preserving appropriate discretion in implementation.

(D) Determination of Classification.

Each Council Policy shall clearly identify whether it is adopted as:

(1) a Directive Policy; or

(2) a Guidance Policy.

The designation shall appear immediately below the Policy Number and Policy Title within the Official Council Policy Register.

(E) Mixed Policies.

When appropriate, a Council Policy may contain both Directive and Guidance provisions.

Each subsection shall clearly identify its intended classification whenever necessary to avoid ambiguity.

In the event of uncertainty, Guidance language shall not be interpreted as creating mandatory obligations.

(F) Rules of Construction.

In interpreting Council Policies:

1. Directive language shall be construed according to its mandatory meaning.
2. Guidance language shall be construed as expressing legislative intent and recommended governmental practice.
3. Every Policy shall be interpreted according to its stated purpose.
4. Ambiguities shall be resolved in favor of harmonizing Directive and Guidance provisions whenever reasonably possible.

(G) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that distinguishing between Directive Policies and Guidance Policies:

1. improves legislative clarity;
2. reduces ambiguity;
3. improves administrative implementation;
4. preserves managerial flexibility where appropriate;
5. strengthens internal governance;
6. provides greater transparency regarding Council's intent; and
7. reduces the likelihood of unnecessary disputes concerning the interpretation of Council Policies.

SECTION 5.

COUNCIL POLICY LIFECYCLE.

(A) Purpose.

The purpose of this Section is to establish a standardized lifecycle governing the development, adoption, implementation, review, amendment, suspension, retirement, and archival of Council Policies.

Council finds that a formal lifecycle promotes transparency, accountability, consistency, institutional memory, and sound municipal governance.

(B) Official Policy Status.

Every Council Policy shall be assigned one of the following official status classifications.

(1) Draft

A Policy being prepared for consideration but not yet formally introduced before Council.

Draft Policies shall have no legal or administrative effect.

(2) Proposed

A Policy that has been formally introduced for legislative consideration but has not yet been adopted.

Proposed Policies shall be available for public inspection and committee review.

(3) Adopted

A Policy approved by Council by the vote required under this Rule.

Upon adoption, the Clerk shall assign the Policy Number, classification, effective date, and status.

(4) Active

A Policy currently in force.

Active Policies shall be maintained within the Official Council Policy Register and shall constitute the official legislative policy of the City on the subject addressed.

(5) Under Review

A Policy undergoing scheduled review, revision, or evaluation.

A Policy designated Under Review shall remain fully effective unless separately suspended or repealed.

(6) Suspended

A Policy temporarily suspended by Council.

A suspended Policy shall have no operative effect during the period of suspension.

Unless otherwise specified by Council, suspension shall not constitute repeal.

(7) Retired

A Policy formally repealed or superseded by subsequent legislative action.

Retired Policies shall remain permanently listed within the historical portion of the Council Policy Register.

(8) Archived

A Policy preserved solely for historical, educational, or legislative reference.

Archived Policies shall not have legal or administrative effect but shall remain permanently accessible as part of the City's legislative history.

(C) Status Changes.

The Clerk of Council shall promptly update the Official Council Policy Register whenever a Policy changes status.

Each status change shall identify:

1. date of change;
2. legislative authority;
3. ordinance, resolution, or motion number, if applicable;
4. effective date;
5. Clerk's certification.

(D) Review Schedule.

Every Active Policy shall be reviewed at least once every five (5) years unless Council establishes a shorter review interval.

Council may require more frequent review of Policies concerning:

- financial controls;
- cybersecurity;
- public safety;
- emergency management;
- legal compliance;
- technology;
- risk management;
- procurement;
- or other rapidly changing subject matter.

(E) Review Report.

Whenever a Policy is reviewed, the reviewing committee, department, or Council member shall recommend one of the following:

1. Continue without amendment.
2. Amend.
3. Suspend.
4. Retire.
5. Archive.
6. Consolidate with another Policy.
7. Divide into multiple Policies.

(F) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that regular review of Council Policies:

1. improves governmental effectiveness;
2. reduces obsolete practices;
3. improves transparency;
4. preserves institutional knowledge;
5. strengthens legislative oversight;
6. encourages continuous improvement;
7. improves public confidence in municipal governance.

(G) Preservation of Legislative History.

No Policy shall be permanently deleted from the Council Policy Register.

Repealed, superseded, suspended, retired, or archived Policies shall remain permanently indexed together with:

- their complete revision history;
- adoption dates;
- amendment history;
- legislative authority;
- effective dates;
- review history;
- historical notes; and
- cross-references to successor Policies.

The purpose of this requirement is to preserve the legislative history and institutional memory of the City of Sheffield Lake.

SECTION 6.

OFFICIAL COUNCIL POLICY REGISTER.

(A) Creation.

There is hereby established the **Official Council Policy Register** ("Register"), which shall constitute the permanent legislative repository of all Council Policies adopted pursuant to this Rule.

The Register shall be maintained by the Clerk of Council as an official record of the City.

The Register shall be maintained in:

1. a permanent bound record;
2. an indexed electronic database;
3. a searchable digital format available to City officials; and
4. such additional formats as Council may authorize to preserve the permanent legislative history of the City.

(B) Official Contents.

Every Council Policy entered into the Register shall contain, at a minimum, the following information:

- (1) Policy Number;
- (2) Policy Title;
- (3) Policy Classification;
- (4) Directive Policy or Guidance Policy designation;
- (5) Statement of Purpose;
- (6) Scope of Application;
- (7) Policy Statement;
- (8) Legislative Authority;
- (9) Charter, Ordinance, Rule, or Resolution references;
- (10) Responsible Council Committee;
- (11) Responsible Department(s), Office(s), Board(s), or Commission(s), if applicable;
- (12) Adoption Date;
- (13) Effective Date;
- (14) Scheduled Review Date;
- (15) Current Policy Status;
- (16) Amendment History;
- (17) Suspension History;
- (18) Repeal History;
- (19) Related Policies;
- (20) Cross-References;

- (21) Clerk's Certification;
- (22) Revision History;
- (23) Legislative Notes, when authorized by Council.

(C) Numbering System.

Each Policy shall receive a permanent Policy Number.

Policy Numbers shall consist of:

Classification Code – Sequential Number

Examples include:

LEG-001

FIN-014

RSK-003

PARK-007

PUB-004

Policy Numbers shall never be reused after retirement or repeal.

Reserved numbers shall remain permanently reserved unless reassigned by Council.

(D) Historical Preservation.

The Register shall permanently preserve:

- every adopted Policy;
- every amendment;
- every repeal;
- every suspension;
- every archived Policy;
- every retired Policy;
- every review action;
- every legislative note authorized by Council.

No historical record shall be deleted.

(E) Electronic Availability.

The Register shall be maintained in a searchable electronic format.

To the extent practicable, the public version of the Register shall be available through the City's official website.

Nothing herein shall require publication of information exempt from disclosure under Ohio law.

(F) Official Version.

The Register maintained by the Clerk of Council shall constitute the official legislative record of all Council Policies.

In the event of any discrepancy between unofficial copies and the official Register, the official Register shall control.

(G) Certification.

The Clerk of Council shall certify every adopted Policy by recording:

1. the date adopted;
2. the vote of Council;
3. the effective date;
4. the Policy Number;
5. the Classification;
6. the Policy Status;
7. the Clerk's signature or certification.

(H) Annual Report.

Not later than March 1 of each calendar year, the Clerk of Council shall prepare a **Council Policy Register Report** summarizing:

1. Policies adopted during the preceding year;
2. Policies amended;
3. Policies suspended;
4. Policies retired;
5. Policies archived;
6. Policies scheduled for review during the upcoming year;
7. Recommendations for updating the Register.

The report shall be transmitted to every Council Member and shall become part of the permanent legislative record.

(I) Public Transparency.

Council declares that the Register is intended to improve public understanding of municipal governance.

Except as otherwise provided by law, the Register shall be organized in a manner that is:

1. publicly understandable;
2. logically indexed;
3. searchable;
4. historically complete;
5. readily available for legislative reference.

(J) Legislative Intent.

Council finds that the Official Council Policy Register is an essential component of sound municipal governance.

By maintaining a permanent and organized repository of legislative policies, the Register shall:

1. preserve institutional memory;
2. improve transparency;
3. strengthen legislative oversight;
4. improve administrative consistency;
5. reduce uncertainty;
6. facilitate future policy development; and
7. promote continuity across successive Councils and municipal administrations.

SECTION 7.

ADOPTION OF COUNCIL POLICIES.

(A) Introduction.

Any member of Council may introduce a proposed Council Policy for consideration.

A proposed Policy may be referred to a standing committee, special committee, or Work Session for review before consideration by Council.

Nothing contained herein shall prohibit Council from considering a proposed Policy without committee referral when otherwise authorized by the Rules of Council.

(B) Policy Impact Statement.

Every proposed Council Policy shall be accompanied by a Policy Impact Statement prepared by the sponsoring Council Member or committee.

The Policy Impact Statement shall become part of the permanent legislative record.

(C) Minimum Contents.

The Policy Impact Statement shall include, whenever applicable:

1. Policy Title;
2. Policy Classification;
3. Directive Policy or Guidance Policy designation;
4. Statement of Purpose;
5. Legislative Need;
6. Departments, Boards, Offices, or Committees affected;
7. Estimated Fiscal Impact, if any;
8. Estimated Staffing Impact, if any;
9. Estimated Technology Impact, if any;
10. Related Ordinances;
11. Related Council Rules;
12. Related Council Policies;
13. Suggested implementation schedule;
14. Recommended review interval;
15. Sponsor's Statement of Legislative Intent.

(D) Legal Review.

The sponsoring Council Member, any committee of Council, or City Council by majority vote may request the Law Director to provide a legal opinion concerning any proposed Council Policy.

Legal review shall be advisory only.

The absence of a legal opinion shall not affect Council's authority to adopt, amend, suspend, or repeal a Council Policy.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed as requiring legal review prior to legislative consideration.

(E) Administrative Consultation.

Council may request comments, recommendations, technical assistance, or implementation advice from:

1. the Mayor;
2. department directors;
3. boards or commissions;
4. municipal employees;
5. outside consultants;
6. legal counsel;
7. members of the public.

Such consultation shall be advisory only unless otherwise required by law.

(F) Adoption.

Council Policies shall be adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members elected to Council.

Upon adoption, the Clerk shall assign the official Policy Number and enter the Policy into the Official Council Policy Register.

(G) Effective Date.

Unless otherwise specified within the Policy, every Council Policy shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

(H) Amendment.

Any amendment to an existing Council Policy shall require the affirmative vote of **five (5) members of Council**.

Amendments shall be recorded in the Policy Register together with:

1. amendment date;
2. amendment number;
3. legislative authority;
4. revision summary.

(I) Suspension.

A Council Policy may be suspended only upon the affirmative vote of **five (5) members of Council**.

Unless otherwise provided, suspension shall be temporary and shall not constitute repeal.

(J) Repeal.

A Council Policy may be repealed only upon the affirmative vote of **five (5) members of Council**.

Repealed Policies shall remain permanently preserved within the historical portion of the Official Council Policy Register.

(K) Emergency Policies.

When Council determines that immediate action is necessary to protect the public interest or the orderly operation of municipal government, a Directive Policy may be adopted on an emergency basis by the same vote otherwise required for adoption.

Emergency Policies shall automatically be placed on the agenda for review within one hundred eighty (180) days after adoption to determine whether they should:

1. remain in effect;
2. be amended;
3. be repealed; or
4. be converted into an ordinance if required by law.

(L) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that requiring a standardized Policy Impact Statement prior to adoption:

1. improves legislative deliberation;
2. promotes informed decision-making;
3. enhances transparency;
4. provides a permanent legislative history;
5. improves future policy review;
6. encourages thoughtful drafting;
7. strengthens institutional memory.

SECTION 8.

POLICY OWNERSHIP, ADMINISTRATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION.

(A) Purpose.

Council finds that every Council Policy should have clearly identified responsibility for its administration, review, maintenance, and continuous improvement.

Accordingly, each Council Policy shall identify a Policy Owner and, where appropriate, one or more Policy Administrators.

The purpose of this Section is to establish accountability while preserving Council's legislative authority.

(B) Policy Owner.

Every Council Policy shall designate a Policy Owner.

The Policy Owner shall be an office, department, committee, board, commission, or other governmental entity—not an individual employee.

Examples include:

- City Council;
- Council President;
- Clerk of Council;
- Finance and Audit Committee;
- Ordinance Committee;
- Finance Director;
- Service Director;
- Police Chief;
- Fire Chief;
- Mayor;

- Park-Recreation Board;
- Planning Commission;
- Board of Zoning Appeals;
- Civil Service Commission; or

such other municipal office or body as Council may designate.

(C) Responsibilities of the Policy Owner.

Unless otherwise provided by Council, the Policy Owner shall:

1. monitor implementation of the Policy;
2. evaluate the continuing effectiveness of the Policy;
3. recommend amendments when appropriate;
4. recommend repeal when the Policy is no longer necessary;
5. recommend consolidation of overlapping Policies;
6. recommend replacement of obsolete Policies;
7. ensure periodic review in accordance with this Rule;
8. notify Council of conflicts with newly enacted legislation;
9. identify implementation concerns;
10. recommend improvements promoting efficiency, accountability, transparency, or public service.

(D) Policy Administrator.

Where appropriate, Council may designate one or more Policy Administrators.

A Policy Administrator shall be responsible for implementing the Policy on behalf of the Policy Owner.

Policy Administrators may include:

- municipal departments;
- municipal officers;
- boards;
- commissions;
- committees;
- contracted professionals;
- other governmental entities authorized by law.

(E) Relationship Between Owner and Administrator.

Unless otherwise provided:

The Policy Owner establishes legislative accountability.

The Policy Administrator implements operational responsibilities.

Nothing contained herein authorizes a Policy Administrator to amend, suspend, repeal, reinterpret, or waive any Council Policy.

(F) Annual Status Report.

A Policy Owner may submit an annual Policy Status Report to Council summarizing:

1. implementation activities;
2. recommendations for improvement;
3. significant operational issues;
4. legal or regulatory developments;
5. financial considerations;
6. recommended amendments;
7. recommended retirements;
8. recommended consolidations.

Council may require such reports whenever deemed appropriate.

(G) Vacancy.

A vacancy in the office designated as Policy Owner shall not invalidate a Council Policy.

Responsibility shall automatically transfer to the acting official or successor occupying that office.

(H) Failure to Act.

Failure of a Policy Owner or Policy Administrator to perform duties assigned by this Rule shall not invalidate any Council Policy.

Council retains authority to:

1. reassign ownership;
2. designate additional administrators;
3. amend the Policy;
4. repeal the Policy;
5. require reports or corrective action.

(I) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that assigning Policy Ownership:

1. strengthens accountability;
2. improves implementation;
3. preserves institutional memory;
4. promotes continuous improvement;
5. facilitates periodic review;
6. improves coordination between Council and municipal departments;

7. enhances the long-term effectiveness of municipal governance.

SECTION 9.

POLICY REVIEW, CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, AND MASTER REVIEW CALENDAR.

(A) Purpose.

Council finds that effective governance requires periodic evaluation of existing Council Policies to ensure they remain current, effective, legally compliant, administratively practical, and consistent with the long-term interests of the City.

Accordingly, there is hereby established a permanent Policy Review Program.

(B) Master Policy Review Calendar.

The Clerk of Council shall maintain a Master Policy Review Calendar.

The calendar shall distribute Policy reviews throughout the calendar year in order to provide an orderly and continuous process of legislative review.

Unless otherwise directed by Council, the Clerk should schedule Policy reviews generally as follows:

January

Financial Management Policies (FIN)

February

Governance Policies (GOV)

March

Legislative Policies (LEG)

April

Human Resources Policies (HR)

May

Information Technology Policies (IT)

June

Risk Management Policies (RSK)

July

Infrastructure Policies (INF)

August

Parks and Recreation Policies (PARK)

September

Utilities Policies (UTL)

October

Strategic Planning Policies (STR)

November

Public Information and Transparency Policies (PUB)

December

Facilities, Environmental Stewardship, Municipal Administration, and Public Safety Policies (FAC, ENV, ADM, SAF).

Council may alter this schedule whenever necessary.

(C) Five-Year Review Requirement.

Every Active Council Policy shall undergo formal review at least once every five (5) years.

Council may require more frequent review whenever:

1. laws materially change;
2. technology substantially changes;
3. operational experience indicates revision is warranted;
4. significant financial implications arise;
5. Council otherwise determines review to be appropriate.

(D) Responsibility for Review.

Policy reviews shall ordinarily be conducted by:

1. the Policy Owner;
2. the appropriate Council Committee;
3. the designated Policy Administrator;
4. such advisory committee or consultant as Council may authorize.

(E) Council Policy Review Report.

Every formal review shall result in a written **Council Policy Review Report**.

The report shall become part of the permanent legislative history of the Policy.

The report should include:

1. Policy Number;
2. Policy Title;
3. Policy Classification;

4. Policy Status;
5. Date of Review;
6. Reviewing Body;
7. Summary of Findings;
8. Legal Developments, if any;
9. Administrative Experience;
10. Financial Impact;
11. Operational Effectiveness;
12. Public Comments received, if any;
13. Recommendations.

(F) Recommendations.

The Review Report shall recommend one or more of the following:

1. Continue without change.
2. Amend.
3. Suspend.
4. Repeal.
5. Archive.
6. Consolidate.
7. Divide.
8. Convert to Ordinance.
9. Convert to Guidance Policy.
10. Convert to Directive Policy.
11. Assign a new Policy Owner.
12. Establish a different review interval.

(G) Continuous Improvement.

Council adopts the principle of continuous improvement for all Council Policies.

Accordingly, Policy Owners and Policy Administrators are encouraged to recommend improvements whenever experience demonstrates that a Policy may be made more effective, efficient, transparent, economical, or understandable.

Nothing contained herein shall require Council to wait until the scheduled review date before considering amendments.

(H) Legislative History.

Every Review Report shall be retained permanently within the Official Council Policy Register.

The historical record shall include:

- original Policy;

- all amendments;
- all Review Reports;
- supporting documents authorized by Council;
- legislative findings;
- related ordinances;
- cross references.

(I) Annual Policy Review Report.

Not later than March 31 of each calendar year, the Clerk of Council shall prepare a comprehensive **Annual Council Policy Report** summarizing:

1. Policies adopted;
2. Policies amended;
3. Policies suspended;
4. Policies repealed;
5. Policies archived;
6. Policies reviewed;
7. Policies scheduled for review during the upcoming year;
8. recommendations for improving the Council Policy Governance System.

The Annual Report shall be transmitted to every Council Member and entered into the permanent legislative record.

(J) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that periodic review and continuous improvement:

1. strengthens municipal governance;
2. promotes transparency;
3. reduces obsolete governmental practices;
4. preserves institutional knowledge;
5. improves administrative consistency;
6. enhances accountability;
7. promotes responsible stewardship of public resources;
8. improves public confidence in municipal government.

SECTION 10.

STANDARDIZED POLICY FORMAT AND DRAFTING REQUIREMENTS.

(A) Purpose.

To promote clarity, consistency, transparency, and long-term institutional continuity, every Council Policy adopted pursuant to this Rule shall utilize a standardized format.

Council finds that standardized drafting improves legislative understanding, simplifies future amendments, facilitates public access, and strengthens administrative implementation.

(B) Official Policy Template.

Unless Council determines that a different format is necessary, every Council Policy shall contain the following sections in substantially the following order:

1. Policy Number
2. Policy Title
3. Policy Classification
4. Directive Policy or Guidance Policy designation
5. Purpose
6. Scope
7. Authority
8. Definitions (when appropriate)
9. Policy Statement
10. Responsibilities
11. Policy Owner
12. Policy Administrator(s), if applicable
13. Performance Measures, when appropriate
14. Exceptions
15. Related Charter Provisions
16. Related Ordinances
17. Related Council Rules
18. Related Council Policies
19. Related Administrative Manuals
20. Cross References
21. Scheduled Review Date
22. Revision History
23. Clerk's Certification

Council may omit sections that are not applicable to a particular Policy, provided the omission does not impair clarity.

(C) Standardized Drafting.

Council Policies shall be drafted using clear, concise, and understandable language.

Whenever reasonably possible:

1. defined terms should be used consistently;
2. unnecessary duplication should be avoided;
3. cross references should be included where appropriate;
4. mandatory requirements shall be distinguished from advisory guidance;

5. technical language should be limited to that necessary for accurate administration.

(D) Performance Measures.

Whenever practical, a Directive Policy should identify one or more measurable performance indicators to assist Council in evaluating the effectiveness of the Policy.

Examples include:

- reporting deadlines;
- financial benchmarks;
- audit findings;
- compliance rates;
- response times;
- completion percentages;
- implementation milestones;
- other objective performance criteria appropriate to the Policy.

The absence of performance measures shall not affect the validity of a Council Policy.

(E) Uniform Numbering.

Policy numbering shall remain permanent throughout the life of the Policy.

When a Policy is amended, its Policy Number shall remain unchanged.

Revision numbers shall identify amendments without altering the original Policy Number.

(F) Standardized Revisions.

Every amendment shall include a Revision History identifying:

1. date adopted;
2. legislative authority;
3. revision number;
4. summary of changes;
5. effective date.

The Clerk shall maintain the complete revision history within the Official Council Policy Register.

(G) Standard Forms.

Council may adopt standardized forms, checklists, drafting guides, templates, style manuals, and editorial standards to assist in the preparation of Council Policies.

Such administrative drafting materials may be updated by the Clerk of Council with the approval of the Council President, provided that no substantive legislative provision is altered without action by Council.

(H) Plain Language.

Council encourages the use of plain language whenever reasonably consistent with legal precision.

Policies should be understandable by elected officials, municipal employees, and members of the public while remaining sufficiently precise to provide consistent administrative guidance.

(I) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that standardized drafting:

1. improves legislative consistency;
2. enhances transparency;
3. reduces ambiguity;
4. facilitates policy review;
5. simplifies future amendments;
6. improves public accessibility;
7. strengthens institutional memory;
8. promotes professional municipal governance.

SECTION 11.

POLICY INTERPRETATION, CONFLICT RESOLUTION, AND RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

(A) Purpose.

The purpose of this Section is to establish uniform principles governing the interpretation of Council Policies and the resolution of conflicts among Policies or between Council Policies and other governing authorities.

Council finds that consistent interpretation promotes fairness, administrative efficiency, transparency, and continuity of municipal governance.

(B) Presumption of Harmonization.

Whenever reasonably possible, Council Policies shall be interpreted in a manner that gives effect to every applicable provision.

No Policy shall be interpreted so as to create unnecessary conflict with another Policy if a reasonable construction exists that harmonizes both.

(C) Hierarchy of Authority.

Whenever a Council Policy conflicts with another governing authority, the following hierarchy shall control:

1. United States Constitution;
2. Ohio Constitution;
3. Ohio Revised Code;
4. Sheffield Lake Charter;
5. Codified Ordinances;
6. Rules of Council;
7. Council Policies;
8. Executive Administrative Policies;
9. Administrative Manuals;
10. Department Procedures;
11. Forms, Checklists, Technical Standards, and Work Instructions.

Council Policies shall be interpreted consistently with all higher governing authorities whenever reasonably possible.

(D) Rules of Construction.

Unless otherwise expressly provided:

1. A specific Policy shall control over a general Policy governing the same subject.
2. A Directive Policy shall control over a Guidance Policy addressing the same subject.
3. A later adopted Policy shall control over an earlier Policy only to the extent the two cannot reasonably be harmonized.
4. Policies shall be interpreted according to their stated purpose.
5. Titles and headings are provided for convenience and shall not control substantive interpretation.
6. Words in the singular include the plural where appropriate, and words in the plural include the singular.
7. References to departments, offices, boards, or commissions include their lawful successors.
8. References to statutes, ordinances, or Charter provisions include subsequent amendments unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(E) Interpretation by Council.

City Council shall retain the exclusive authority to issue official interpretations of Council Policies.

Interpretations may be adopted by Resolution, Policy Interpretation, Motion, or other legislative action authorized by the Rules of Council.

Official interpretations shall become part of the permanent legislative history of the affected Policy and shall be entered into the Official Council Policy Register.

(F) Advisory Opinions.

Council may request advisory opinions concerning the interpretation of any Council Policy from:

1. the Law Director;
2. the Mayor;
3. municipal officers;
4. department directors;
5. boards or commissions;
6. outside consultants;
7. other qualified persons.

All advisory opinions shall be nonbinding unless formally adopted by Council.

(G) Resolution of Ambiguities.

Whenever uncertainty exists regarding the meaning or application of a Council Policy:

1. the matter may be referred to the appropriate Council Committee;
2. the committee may conduct hearings or receive public comment;
3. the committee may recommend clarification, amendment, consolidation, repeal, or no action;
4. Council may act directly without committee referral whenever it determines immediate clarification is appropriate.

(H) Effect of Interpretation.

Official interpretations adopted by Council shall:

1. be recorded within the Official Council Policy Register;
2. remain effective until modified by subsequent legislative action;
3. be considered part of the legislative history of the affected Policy;
4. not amend the Policy unless expressly stated by Council.

(I) No Implied Repeal.

Council Policies shall not be deemed repealed by implication.

Whenever reasonably possible, Policies shall be interpreted to coexist.

Repeal by implication shall be disfavored.

(J) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that uniform interpretation procedures:

1. reduce uncertainty;
2. improve administrative consistency;

3. preserve legislative intent;
4. strengthen institutional continuity;
5. reduce unnecessary disputes;
6. improve transparency;
7. promote responsible municipal governance.

SECTION 12.

POLICY EXCEPTIONS, TEMPORARY DEVIATIONS, AND WAIVERS.

(A) Purpose.

Council recognizes that extraordinary circumstances may occasionally require temporary deviation from a Council Policy.

The purpose of this Section is to establish a transparent, accountable, and documented process for considering Policy Exceptions while preserving the integrity of the Council Policy Governance System.

Council further finds that deviations from established Policies should be rare, well documented, and subject to appropriate legislative oversight.

(B) General Rule.

Except as otherwise expressly authorized by a Council Policy, every municipal officer, department, board, commission, committee, and employee shall comply with all applicable Directive Council Policies.

Guidance Policies shall be implemented consistent with their advisory nature.

(C) Administrative Exceptions.

Where expressly authorized within an individual Council Policy, the designated Policy Owner may approve a minor administrative exception.

Administrative exceptions shall:

1. be in writing;
2. identify the specific Policy involved;
3. identify the provision from which deviation is authorized;
4. state the reasons supporting the exception;
5. specify the duration of the exception;
6. identify any conditions imposed;
7. be filed with the Clerk of Council within ten (10) business days.

No administrative exception may conflict with:

- the United States Constitution;
- the Ohio Constitution;
- the Ohio Revised Code;
- the Sheffield Lake Charter;
- any Ordinance; or
- the Rules of Council.

(D) Council-Approved Exceptions.

Any exception not expressly authorized by an existing Council Policy shall require approval by City Council.

Council may approve such an exception by Resolution or by amendment to the affected Council Policy.

The approving legislation shall identify:

1. the Policy involved;
2. the reasons supporting the exception;
3. whether the exception is temporary or permanent;
4. the duration of the exception;
5. any reporting requirements;
6. any conditions imposed by Council.

(E) Emergency Temporary Deviations.

When immediate action is reasonably necessary to protect:

1. public health;
2. public safety;
3. municipal property;
4. essential governmental operations; or
5. compliance with state or federal law,

the Mayor, or the designated Policy Owner if different, may authorize a temporary deviation from a Directive Council Policy, provided that:

- (a) the deviation is limited to the minimum scope reasonably necessary;
- (b) written documentation is prepared within five (5) business days;
- (c) the Clerk of Council is notified promptly; and
- (d) the deviation is presented to Council for review at its next regular meeting.

Unless ratified by Council, an emergency temporary deviation shall expire no later than thirty (30) calendar days after its authorization.

(F) Documentation.

Every approved Policy Exception or Temporary Deviation shall become part of the permanent Policy History maintained within the Official Council Policy Register.

The Clerk shall maintain:

1. date approved;
2. approving authority;
3. affected Policy;
4. justification;
5. expiration date, if applicable;
6. related legislation;
7. disposition.

(G) Annual Reporting.

The Clerk of Council shall include within the Annual Council Policy Report:

1. all Policy Exceptions granted during the preceding year;
2. all Emergency Temporary Deviations;
3. all expired exceptions;
4. recommendations concerning recurring exceptions that may warrant amendment of existing Policies.

(H) Effect.

Approval of a Policy Exception shall not:

1. amend the Policy;
2. establish precedent;
3. repeal the Policy;
4. permanently alter the Policy;
5. authorize future exceptions without additional approval.

(I) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that requiring written documentation of Policy Exceptions:

1. promotes transparency;
2. preserves accountability;
3. discourages informal practices inconsistent with adopted Policies;
4. strengthens legislative oversight;
5. preserves institutional memory;
6. provides a complete administrative record for future Councils.

SECTION 13.

COUNCIL GOVERNANCE KNOWLEDGE REPOSITORY.

(A) Purpose.

The City of Sheffield Lake shall establish and maintain a permanent electronic **Council Governance Knowledge Repository** ("Repository") serving as the official electronic repository of legislative governance documents adopted by City Council.

The Repository shall promote transparency, accountability, institutional memory, continuity of government, public education, and efficient municipal administration through the organized publication and preservation of legislative governance documents.

The Repository is intended to function as a municipal knowledge management system rather than merely an electronic document storage system.

(B) Official Repository.

The Repository shall be maintained in an electronic format capable of providing:

1. searchable content;
2. logical navigation;
3. hyperlinks between related documents;
4. indexed subject categories;
5. cross references;
6. document version history;
7. historical archives;
8. downloadable documents;
9. public accessibility consistent with applicable law;
10. long-term preservation of legislative history.

(C) Repository Contents.

The Repository may include, but is not limited to:

1. Sheffield Lake Charter;
2. Codified Ordinances;
3. Rules of Council;
4. Council Policies;
5. Official Council Policy Register;
6. Legislative Analyses;
7. Policy Impact Statements;
8. Council Interpretations;
9. Committee Charters;

10. Committee Reports;
11. Legislative Forms;
12. Standard Policy Templates;
13. Legislative Drafting Standards;
14. Financial Policies and Procedures;
15. Administrative Manuals authorized by Council;
16. Strategic Plans;
17. Capital Planning Documents;
18. Historical Legislative Documents;
19. Frequently Asked Questions approved by Council;
20. educational materials approved by Council;
21. such additional governance documents as Council may authorize.

(D) Knowledge Organization.

The Repository shall organize information in a manner that permits users to understand the relationship among governance documents.

Whenever reasonably practicable, individual governance documents should contain hyperlinks or cross references to:

1. related Charter provisions;
2. related Ordinances;
3. related Rules of Council;
4. related Council Policies;
5. related Administrative Manuals;
6. related forms;
7. related reports;
8. related legislative analyses;
9. related committee actions;
10. other related governance documents.

(E) Public Accessibility.

To the maximum extent permitted by law, the Repository shall be available through the City's official website.

Nothing contained herein shall require publication of confidential information or records exempt from disclosure under the Ohio Public Records Act or other applicable law.

(F) Technology Neutrality.

Council intentionally adopts this Rule in a technology-neutral manner.

The Repository may utilize any electronic knowledge management platform, content management system, document management system, website architecture, database, or substantially similar technology approved by Council, provided the system supports the purposes established by this Rule.

No software platform shall be required by this Rule.

(G) Open Standards and Portability.

The Repository shall, whenever reasonably practicable:

1. permit export of governance documents into commonly accepted, non-proprietary formats;
2. preserve hyperlinks and cross references;
3. maintain historical revision information;
4. permit migration to future technology platforms without unreasonable loss of information;
5. maintain appropriate backup and disaster recovery procedures.

Council finds that technology should serve the long-term interests of the City rather than limiting future technological choices.

(H) Version Control.

Every governance document maintained within the Repository shall identify, when applicable:

1. document title;
2. document number;
3. revision number;
4. revision date;
5. adoption date;
6. effective date;
7. approving legislative authority;
8. document status;
9. scheduled review date;
10. responsible Policy Owner.

Previous versions shall remain preserved within the historical archive unless otherwise prohibited by law.

(I) Educational Function.

Council finds that effective government depends upon informed elected officials, municipal employees, and citizens.

Accordingly, the Repository should be organized to encourage public understanding of municipal governance through logical organization, explanatory materials, cross references, and educational resources approved by Council.

Nothing contained herein authorizes alteration of any adopted governance document except through lawful legislative action.

(J) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that a permanent electronic governance knowledge repository:

1. strengthens transparency;
2. improves accessibility;
3. preserves institutional memory;
4. reduces administrative duplication;
5. improves legislative research;
6. promotes consistency in municipal governance;
7. facilitates future policy development;
8. improves continuity between successive Councils and administrations;
9. supports public education regarding municipal government;
10. promotes responsible stewardship of public information.

SECTION 14.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(A) Purpose.

Council finds that effective municipal government requires continual evaluation and improvement of legislative practices, administrative oversight, internal controls, financial stewardship, public engagement, transparency, and organizational effectiveness.

Accordingly, there is hereby established the **Municipal Governance Continuous Improvement Program** as a permanent component of the Council Policy Governance System.

The purpose of the Program is to encourage continuous improvement in municipal governance while preserving the authority of future Councils to determine the policies and priorities of the City.

(B) Statement of Legislative Policy.

It shall be the continuing policy of the City Council of Sheffield Lake to pursue excellence in municipal governance by:

1. promoting transparency;
2. strengthening accountability;
3. improving public confidence;
4. preserving institutional knowledge;
5. encouraging innovation;

6. improving operational effectiveness;
7. strengthening financial stewardship;
8. improving legislative oversight;
9. encouraging professional public administration;
10. continuously evaluating opportunities for improvement.

(C) Governance Assessment.

Council may periodically evaluate:

1. legislative procedures;
2. Council Rules;
3. Council Policies;
4. committee structure;
5. financial oversight;
6. procurement practices;
7. public engagement;
8. strategic planning;
9. internal controls;
10. administrative reporting;
11. technology utilization;
12. public records management;
13. performance measurement;
14. intergovernmental cooperation;
15. such other governance matters as Council determines appropriate.

(D) Best Practices.

In conducting governance assessments, Council may consider guidance published by:

1. Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA);
2. International City/County Management Association (ICMA);
3. Ohio Auditor of State;
4. Ohio Municipal League;
5. National League of Cities;
6. Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB);
7. Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO);
8. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST);
9. International Organization for Standardization (ISO);
10. other recognized governmental, accounting, auditing, legal, cybersecurity, or public administration organizations.

Consideration of best practices shall be advisory only and shall not constitute automatic adoption of any external standard.

(E) Innovation.

Council encourages municipal officers and employees to recommend improvements that may:

1. reduce costs;
2. improve efficiency;
3. improve public service;
4. improve transparency;
5. strengthen internal controls;
6. reduce unnecessary regulation;
7. improve technology utilization;
8. simplify governmental processes;
9. improve citizen engagement;
10. improve long-term financial sustainability.

Recommendations may be submitted at any time through procedures established by Council.

(F) Performance Measurement.

Whenever reasonably practicable, Council encourages the development of objective performance indicators for significant municipal programs and governance initiatives.

Performance measures should assist Council in evaluating:

1. effectiveness;
2. efficiency;
3. economy;
4. service quality;
5. responsiveness;
6. financial stewardship;
7. public value.

Nothing contained herein requires performance measures where they are impracticable or unnecessary.

(G) Pilot Programs.

Council may authorize temporary pilot programs to evaluate innovative governance practices before permanent adoption.

Pilot programs should identify:

1. objectives;
2. duration;
3. responsible officials;
4. evaluation criteria;
5. reporting requirements;

6. recommendations concerning permanent implementation.

(H) Annual Governance Report.

The Finance and Audit Committee, or such committee as Council may designate, may prepare an **Annual Municipal Governance Report** summarizing:

1. governance improvements adopted;
2. policies reviewed;
3. governance recommendations;
4. significant operational improvements;
5. technology initiatives;
6. transparency initiatives;
7. public participation improvements;
8. recommendations for future legislative consideration.

The Report shall become part of the permanent legislative record.

(I) Continuous Learning.

Council encourages continuing education for elected officials, municipal officers, and employees concerning:

1. municipal law;
2. public finance;
3. ethics;
4. cybersecurity;
5. leadership;
6. public administration;
7. risk management;
8. economic development;
9. technology;
10. other subjects promoting effective municipal government.

(J) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that continuous improvement:

1. promotes responsible stewardship of public resources;
2. improves governmental effectiveness;
3. strengthens accountability;
4. enhances transparency;
5. preserves institutional knowledge;
6. encourages innovation;
7. improves public confidence;
8. supports long-term financial sustainability;

9. strengthens representative government;
10. better serves the citizens of Sheffield Lake.

SECTION 15.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE.

(A) Purpose.

The purpose of this Section is to express the enduring principles of governance that shall guide the interpretation, administration, and continuous improvement of the Council Policy Governance System.

Council declares that these principles represent the values of responsible representative government and shall serve as guidance for future Councils in administering this Rule.

(B) Public Service.

Municipal government exists to serve the public interest.

Every legislative action should be undertaken with honesty, integrity, fairness, accountability, and respect for the citizens of Sheffield Lake.

(C) Stewardship.

Public office is a public trust.

Council Members, municipal officers, employees, boards, commissions, and committees are temporary stewards of the authority and resources entrusted to them by the citizens.

Every generation of public officials has a duty to preserve, improve, and responsibly transfer that trust to those who follow.

(D) Transparency.

Transparent government promotes public confidence.

Whenever reasonably permitted by law, governmental decision-making should be conducted openly, documented thoroughly, and made readily accessible to the public.

(E) Accountability.

Municipal authority should be accompanied by clear responsibility.

Council encourages the assignment of responsibility for every significant governmental function together with objective methods for evaluating performance and continuous improvement.

(F) Fiscal Responsibility.

Public resources shall be managed prudently, economically, efficiently, and honestly.

Council encourages sound financial management, effective internal controls, long-term planning, responsible procurement, careful stewardship of municipal assets, and objective evaluation of financial risks.

(G) Institutional Knowledge.

Council recognizes that knowledge accumulated through legislative experience is a valuable public asset.

Whenever reasonably practicable, legislative history, policies, reports, analyses, interpretations, and governance documents should be preserved for the benefit of future elected officials and the public.

(H) Continuous Improvement.

Council recognizes that no governmental system is perfect.

Municipal governance should continually evolve through thoughtful evaluation, professional administration, public participation, technological advancement, and responsible legislative reform.

Council encourages continual improvement rather than complacency.

(I) Consistency.

Council Policies should be applied consistently throughout municipal government unless otherwise authorized by law.

Consistency promotes fairness, predictability, administrative efficiency, and public confidence.

(J) Innovation.

Council encourages innovation, responsible experimentation, and adoption of improved governmental practices whenever consistent with law, fiscal responsibility, and the public interest.

Innovation should strengthen—not weaken—accountability, transparency, and public trust.

(K) Simplicity.

Council encourages governmental processes that are understandable, efficient, and reasonably simple to administer.

Whenever reasonably possible, unnecessary complexity should be reduced while preserving legal precision and effective public administration.

(L) Cooperation.

The Charter establishes separate but coequal branches of municipal government.

Council recognizes that effective municipal government depends upon mutual respect, open communication, cooperation, and faithful execution of the respective responsibilities assigned by law.

Nothing contained herein shall be interpreted to diminish the constitutional authority of any branch of municipal government.

(M) Legacy.

Council declares that one of its highest responsibilities is to leave the institutions of municipal government stronger than they were received.

Accordingly, Council adopts this Rule with the intent of establishing governance systems that:

1. preserve institutional memory;
2. strengthen representative government;
3. improve administrative consistency;
4. encourage professional public administration;
5. protect public resources;
6. improve public confidence;
7. promote transparency;
8. provide future Councils with a strong and enduring framework for responsible municipal governance.

(N) Legislative Findings.

Council finds that the principles expressed in this Section are intended to serve as enduring guidance for the interpretation and administration of Rule No. 53.

These principles shall not create independent legal rights or causes of action but shall be considered persuasive legislative expressions of the public policy of the City of Sheffield Lake concerning responsible municipal governance.

SECTION 16.

CODIFICATION.

It is the intention of the Council of the City of Sheffield Lake that the provisions of this Ordinance shall become and remain a permanent part of the Rules of Council and the Codified Ordinances of the City of Sheffield Lake.

The provisions enacted herein shall be codified within Chapter 111 of the Rules of Council as **Rule No. 53 – Council Policy Governance**.

The codifier is authorized to renumber, re-letter, reorganize, rearrange, and otherwise format the provisions of this Ordinance as necessary to accomplish proper codification.

The codifier may correct formatting, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, numbering, citations, cross-references, and similar nonsubstantive matters consistent with the legislative intent of this Ordinance.

SECTION 17.

REPEAL OF CONFLICTING RULES.

All Rules of Council, ordinances, resolutions, motions, policies, procedures, customs, or practices inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed only to the extent of such conflict.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed as repealing or modifying any provision of the Sheffield Lake Charter or any provision of the Codified Ordinances except as expressly provided herein.

Nothing contained herein shall invalidate any existing administrative policy, manual, or departmental procedure unless subsequently determined by Council to conflict with this Rule.

SECTION 18.

AUTHORITY OF THE LAW DIRECTOR.

The Law Director is authorized to make such nonsubstantive revisions as are reasonably necessary to harmonize, implement, codify, and administer this Ordinance, including corrections to formatting, grammar, punctuation, numbering, citations, cross-references, and similar technical matters.

The Law Director shall have no authority to alter:

1. legislative findings;
2. statements of legislative intent;
3. policy classifications;
4. voting requirements;
5. governance principles;
6. policy lifecycle requirements;
7. the Council Governance Knowledge Repository;
8. or any other substantive provision established by this Ordinance,

without subsequent legislative action by Council.

SECTION 19.

LIBERAL CONSTRUCTION.

This Ordinance shall be liberally construed to:

- (A) preserve institutional knowledge;
- (B) strengthen representative government;
- (C) improve transparency;
- (D) improve administrative consistency;
- (E) strengthen legislative oversight;
- (F) improve municipal governance;
- (G) encourage continuous improvement;
- (H) promote public accessibility;
- (I) preserve legislative history;
- (J) encourage responsible stewardship of public resources;
- (K) provide future Councils with a durable governance framework.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed to create a private cause of action or enlarge or diminish the jurisdiction of any court.

SECTION 20.

SEVERABILITY.

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, provision, definition, interpretation, finding, declaration, or application of this Ordinance is held invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such determination shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance, which shall remain in full force and effect.

Council hereby declares that it would have adopted this Ordinance and every section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, legislative finding, declaration, policy framework, and governance provision thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more portions may subsequently be declared invalid.

SECTION 21.

TRANSITIONAL IMPLEMENTATION.

Council recognizes that the Council Policy Governance System established by this Ordinance will be implemented over time.

Accordingly:

1. The Clerk of Council shall establish the Official Council Policy Register as soon as reasonably practicable following the effective date of this Ordinance.
2. Existing Council policies, directives, and legislative guidance may be reviewed and incorporated into the Register by subsequent action of Council.
3. Nothing contained herein shall require the immediate conversion of existing legislative materials into the standardized format established by this Rule.
4. Council may adopt additional administrative standards, templates, filing procedures, repository requirements, and implementation guidance by subsequent Policy or Resolution consistent with this Rule.

SECTION 22.

EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Resolution shall take effect and be in force at the earliest time permitted by the Charter and laws of the State of Ohio.

Upon its effective date, Rule No. 53 shall govern the adoption, administration, organization, interpretation, review, amendment, suspension, repeal, and publication of all Council Policies adopted thereafter.

Council may incorporate existing policies into the Official Council Policy Register through subsequent legislative action without requiring their readoption unless Council determines otherwise.

PASSED THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2026

	Yea	Nay	Not Voting	
Mark Cizl	___	___	___	
Romolo DeBottis	___	___	___	
Aden Fogel	___	___	___	<i>Rocky Radeff, Mayor</i>
Jon Morrow	___	___	___	
Cynthia Petrucci	___	___	___	
Steve Kovach	___	___	___	<i>Rosa Gee, President of Council</i>

Melody Leisure, Clerk of Council

I, Melody Leisure, duly appointed Clerk of Council of Sheffield Lake DO HEREBY CERTIFY that this is a true and exact copy of Ordinance #_____.

PASSED _____, 2026.