

Village of North Fairfield
Finance and Audit Meeting
March 16, 2026

The Village of North Fairfield Council held a Finance and Audit Meeting on Monday March 16, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at 3 East Main Street, North Fairfield, Ohio. Mayor Casey Hacker called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Cody Hacker, present; Mickala Hacker, present; Trevor Arnold, present; Jeremy Antill, absent; Adam Rouse, present; Ben Cherry, present; Interim Village Administrator, Dan Traxler, present; Mayor, Casey Hacker, present; Fiscal Officer, Shellie Cherry, present.

Motion to Excuse Officials Not in Attendance: Mickala Hacker made a motion to excuse Jeremy Antill from tonight's meeting. Adam Rouse seconded the motion. Roll call: Cody Hacker, aye; Trevor Arnold, aye; Mickala Hacker, aye; Ben Cherry, aye; Adam Rouse, aye. All Ayes, **motion carried.**

Fiscal Officer's Report:

- **Previous Minutes of November 03, 2025:** Mickala Hacker made a motion to accept the minutes. Trevor Arnold seconded the motion. Roll call: Cody Hacker, aye; Trevor Arnold, aye; Mickala Hacker, aye; Ben Cherry, aye; Adam Rouse, aye. All Ayes, **motion carried.** Minutes from November 03, 2025, are approved

Finance/Audit Committee:

Summary of Water Rate Strategy

Overview

- **Major takeaway:** RCAP (rate company) recommends a **10%** increase to reach sustainable water operation levels;
- **Current average/benchmarking:** Village current average water bill discussed at **\$39.16**; neighboring towns: **Plymouth \$46.62, Monroeville \$45.18 → 47.44 (July), Attica \$21; New London \$24.70, Shiloh \$96.82, Ohio Rural Water ~\$45.56/month.**
- **Customer impacts & fees:** Conversation to present increase as a monthly dollar amount **\$5.84.**
- **Budget implications:** Concern about relying on carryover and mixing general fund/levy; goal to keep water revenue **2–5%** above expenditures to stay eligible for grants.
- **Process & timing:** Need **three readings**; target to pass by **June** to capture **~six months** of additional water revenue; board can table to third reading if needed.

Rate benchmarking with neighboring towns

- Plymouth is at **\$46.62**; applies **3%** annual increase.
- Monroeville is at **\$45.18**; planned increase to **\$47.44** in July per rate company.
- New London is at **\$24.70**; applies **5%** annual increase.
- Northern Ohio Rural Water is at approximately **\$45+.**

Budgeting, carryover and revenue picture

- Water department must be funded solely from water revenue (consumer rents); other funds and one-time receipts must not subsidize operations.
- Current water rate was increased from **\$36.94** to **\$39.16**; RCAP recommended an additional **10%** increase in June to achieve cost recovery.
- Proposed increase would set the first **2,000 gallons** at **\$43.08.**
- Budgeting used prior-year carryover in revenue estimates (budgeting from **\$245,000** instead of actual **\$86,185.71**), causing misleading results; carryover must be shown in a separate line item, and appropriations must start fresh annually.
- Levy increases apply to the general fund and cannot be used to fund the water department.

Rate increase strategy (percentages & options)

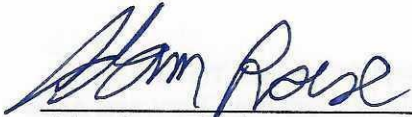
- Proposed **15%** water rate increase; first **2,000 gallons** would cost **\$45.03.** The Council has proposed an increase to **\$45.00.**
- Carryover from previous year was placed into the operating fund, obscuring annual revenue/expenditure; carryover should be recorded in a separate line item.
- General fund levy increases cannot be used to fund the water department.
- Standard EPA maintenance increases of **3–5%** are applied annually; meeting suggested **12–15%** increase to catch up after many years without raises, and the current proposal was considered insufficient.

Approval process, timing & public messaging

- Aim to pass ordinance by **June** to secure **six months** of water revenue this year.
- Approval could occur sooner than **June**.

Adjournment: Mickala Hacker made a motion for adjournment. Trevor Arnold seconded the motion. Council voted, all ayes; motion carried at 6:28 p.m.

Approved and adopted by the Council of the Village of North Fairfield April 6 .2026.


Adam Rouse, Chairman


Shellie Cherry, Fiscal Officer