



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, May 05, 2025 at 6:00 PM

1 Benjamin Franklin Way Franklin, Ohio 45005

www.FranklinOhio.org

CLERK'S JOURNAL

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Centers called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

D. Denny Centers

Paul Ruppert

Mayor Brent Centers

Michael Aldridge

Debbie Fouts

ABSENT

Vice Mayor Todd Hall

Matt Wilcher

Staff: Mr. Westendorf, Ms. Steed, Ms. Dunn, Chief Stitzel, Chief Colon, Mr. Inman and Ms. Chibis.

There were approximately 11 guests in attendance.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Centers led the pledge of allegiance.

4. APPROVE THE CLERK'S JOURNAL AND ACCEPT THE TAPES AS THE OFFICIAL MINUTES

A. April 21, 2025

Motion made by Fouts, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts

Voting Abstaining: D. Centers, Ruppert

Motion passed.

5. PRESENTATIONS

A. HOPE Award (Chief Stitzel)

Chief Stitzel and Firefighter/Paramedic Williams reported that the HOPE team received an award from the Ohio Deflection Association—honoring the EMS led team for their incredible impact on recovery, support, and community healing.

B. Committee Reports

Mrs. Fouts gave an update from the Government Affairs Committee meeting that was held on May 1, 2025.

As part of the regular review of the Rules of Council, Bricker Graydon suggested changes consistent with recent Charter amendments as well as grammatical changes. Other changes include:

- The ability to change the meeting time of Council meetings from 6pm with a majority vote of Council to allow for flexibility as needed. Council was in favor of this change and asked staff to bring legislation that would change the Council start time to 5:30pm.
- Expressly states that Council shall have the right, by majority vote, to set reasonable limits on the length of time for each public comment on a particular item or motion under discussion. Council asked this be removed as it is redundant.
- Adds that “No person shall act in any manner that may genuinely interfere with meetings of Council. By way of example, and not limitation, repeated loud noises, speaking out of turn, and other behaviors that disrupt proceedings or discussions may result in a warning from the presiding officer. Disruptive persons may be removed from Council meetings by the Sergeant-At-Arms.” Council asked this be removed as it is redundant.

Staff will bring the changes back for adoption through a resolution.

Under O.R.C 121.221, certain public bodies (non-elected officials only, Planning Commission, BZA, etc.) may adopt a virtual meeting policy enabling its membership to attend and hold meetings virtually. A policy is required to hold virtual meetings. The Committee was in favor of adopting a policy. Council discussed and was also in favor of adopting a policy.

Mayor Centers had requested to attend an online training class. In his request, he asked what the policy is for Council members that want to attend training. In the absence of a Council policy, the Mayor asked for staff procedure. Mr. Westendorf asks staff to give: How does this benefit the citizens, the organization, and the employee. He asks the employee to list the short, medium and long term effects of the training for each.

The Committee liked the idea of having a procedure in order for training requests for Council. Each request will be brought to Council for consideration. Mayor Centers had a scheduling conflict and withdrew his request for the training.

Chief Colon reviewed a proposed change to the request for law enforcement video request policy. The Committee reviewed the policy provided by Bricker Graydon. Council would like to wait to see if the legislation is contested.

6. RECEPTION OF VISITORS

Mayor Centers opened the Reception of Visitors at 6:49pm.

Mr. Douglas Greathouse of 41 W. 6th Street asked to be heard. He is a member of the Rotary Club. They recently cleaned the riverbank along the bike path. He had concerns about an abundance of timber along the riverbank. He felt this could be fire hazard. The Public works team also aided in the cleanup and did a nice job. He appreciates their help.

Mayor Centers thanked Mr. Greathouse and the Rotary Club for their work. He said there was a great opportunity tomorrow to support the Division of Fire & EMS by voting for Issue 4 to ensure the Division is fully staffed and funded.

Mayor Centers closed the reception of visitors at 6:51pm.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

A. ORDINANCE 2025-10 ADOPTING THE STANDARD CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR ROADWAYS, STORM DRAINAGE, SANITARY SEWER AND PIPE

The City has worked with Verdantas and McBride Dale Clarion to update the Standard Construction Drawings and Specifications. The last update was done in 2004.

This document provides specifications for roadways, storm drainage, water distribution, sanitary sewer, and pipe specifications for new construction and development.

The Public Works and Utilities Committee reviewed the standards at their April 17, 2025 meeting and voted to recommend the updates to Council.

Mayor Centers opened and closed the Public Hearing at 6:56pm as none asked to be heard.

Motion made by D. Centers, Seconded by Ruppert.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts

Motion passed.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION 2025-22 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN AN EASEMENT DEED FOR UTILITIES PURPOSES ON CITY OWNED PROPERTY

The City is working with Duke Energy to install new public utility lines along Sixth Street and in Community Park (which will be underground). The City owns three parcels that would allow the utility companies to relocate their equipment

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts

Motion passed.

B. RESOLUTION 2025-23 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY FOR THE CITY'S ELECTRICITY AGGREGATION PROGRAM

To obtain the most competitive price, the City Manager is authorized to enter into a contract for the supply of electricity which requires municipality to accept a proposal within hours after it is submitted.

Motion made by Aldridge, Seconded by Ruppert.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts

Motion passed.

10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Spray Park Update: Rain and equipment issues have delayed progress. New equipment was scheduled to arrive that week.

Water Main Bidding project: Staff is working to refine the water main replacement project and adding Main from 6th to 8th as an alternative bid option. Looking to put out to bid late 2025, with construction start of March 2026.

A new City Engineer was slated to start on June 9th.

The first Ohio Valley Cruisers Downtown Cruise-In was scheduled to start the following day.

An election was to be held the next day. Mr. Westendorf said he appreciates all the hard work of the Division of Fire & EMS and specifically wanted to take a minute to thank administration staff who were taking personal days to work the polls in support of the levy. He thanked everyone for their donations to the levy committee and time spent supporting the levy.

11. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mrs. Fouts reminded everyone to vote tomorrow and to think about the big issues on the ballot.

Mr. Aldridge went to see the new basketball courts and said the park looks great. He is excited about the roundabout and spray park. He shared a complaint about a softball field at Community Park. Mr. Inman would look into the issue.

Mr. D. Centers asked for an update on Slipcast Brewery. Mr. Westendorf reported that they are still working through the financing process. They are through the SBA environmental portion of the process. Mr. Centers also asked about the Riverscape project and asked if the City should put something on social media. Mr. Westendorf would like to wait until we have a decision on the BUILD grant.

Mr. Ruppert also went to look at the basketball courts and said they are impressive. The new backboards look great. Thank you for all the work that was put into that.

Mayor Centers echoed comments about park. Congressman Landsman would like to host a town hall on May 12 at the Division of Fire from 6-7pm. That was later cancelled due to a scheduling conflict.

The Fire Levy is an opportunity to protect our home and investments.

The Mayor received a call regarding zoning. The resident has a trailer and cannot have it on his larger lot. The Mayor proposed having different options for larger lots with expanded options for storage of trailers.

Council would like to have a discussion regarding potential UDO changes, generator permits, and the use of A-frame signs. Mr. Yoder, the Law Director, and Ms. Fields, the City Planner, should be present at the next meeting for discussion.

Mayor Centers will not be attending ICSC. Mr. Westendorf will be attending and will miss the next meeting.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. To consider the purchase of property for public purposes pursuant to ORC 121.22 (G)(2).

Motion to enter made by Aldridge, Seconded by Ruppert.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts

Motion passed. Council entered into Executive Session at 8:07pm

Motion to exit made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts

Motion passed. Council exited Executive Session at 8:23pm

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by D. Centers, Seconded by Fouts.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts

Motion passed. Council adjourned at 8:24pm.

Brent Centers, Mayor

Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council