

## Regular

May 12, 2025

Ontario City Council met in regular session on May 12, 2025, at the Ontario Local Schools Auditorium with Council President Eddie Gallo presiding. The meeting opened at 8:30 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Jake Duchene, whose father is currently deployed.

Daisy Loper was selected by school administration to fill the role of Mayor for the Day. Ms. Loper was sworn in by Law Director Medwid.

Present during roll call were Council members Troy Sapp, Dave Rehfeldt, Kyle Webb, Josh Bradley, Nathan Sunderland, Council President Eddie Gallo, Mayor Kris Knapp, Mayor for the Day Loper, Law Director Andrew Medwid, Service-Safety Director Adam Gongwer, Chief Tom Hill, Zoning Inspector Benji Hall, Recreation Director Kenn Spencer, and Clerk of Council Cathy VanAuker.

President Gallo displayed a map of Ontario's four Wards and explained the role of the Ward and At-Large Council members. Council and Administration introduced themselves and their background with Ontario.

The minutes of the regular Council meeting of April 30, 2025 were presented for approval. At roll call, four members voted aye, zero nay, one abstain by Mr. Rehfeldt, and the minutes were approved.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

- No reports.

### MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Knapp provided updates:

- A Proclamation was presented to Webb Bernhardt and Cindy Fort of the Mansfield Power Squadron for National Safe Boating Week. The Power Squadron is part of the American Boating Club that offers classes to obtain a license to operate a boat. The next ABC basic operating license class is June 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Two weeks ago Pioneer students spread mulch in the parks and the Ontario Leadership Group picked up trash on North Lex-Springmill. Thank you to Culvers for providing students with complimentary custard for their hard work.
- The Splash Pad opens this weekend.
- Veteran Banners are displayed on Lex-Springmill between Park Avenue West and SR 309.
- The city is partnering with the schools to fix the tennis courts.
- The street paving bid came in \$90,000 below the estimated cost. Kokosing was the low bid.
- Thatcher Samuels, a senior, came forward to share photos and describe the work involved to complete his Eagle Scout project of building a physical workout area along the walking path at Marshall Park. The project took 35 hours.
  - A grant from Richland County Health Department will be used for a sign at the fitness area acknowledging Thatcher Samuels' Eagle Scout project.

The city and school will work together to paint twenty-two fire hydrants next week. All hydrants on the school grounds, a section of Shelby-Ontario Road, and all hydrants in Marshall Park will be painted. Zach McChristy, a senior, was acknowledged for

Regular

May 12, 2025

creating the artwork. Pictures of the logo and block O designs for the fire hydrants were displayed.

- Certificate of Achievement Awards were given to:
  - Thatcher Samuels - outstanding service in the community
  - Zachery McChristy - fire hydrant designs
  - Daisy Loper - Mayor of the Day

## **MAYOR FOR THE DAY REPORT**

Mayor Loper reported on her day at City Hall where she was able to visit each department, learn the duties, responsibilities, and what it takes to keep the city running on a daily basis.

## **SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Gongwer said part of his duties is to respond to complaints from citizens. Robbie Griefenstine notified him of a sink hole near a storm drain in a parking lot on Lex-Springmill. Because this was on private property the owner was notified and they fixed the sink hole that was large enough for someone's foot to fit in or a small car tire to get stuck in.

- Director Gongwer presented Robbie Griefenstine with a Community Safety Recognition Award for notifying the City of Ontario of a safety hazard for cars and pedestrians.

## **CHIEF OF POLICE'S REPORT**

Chief Tom Hill reported:

- Calls for service are up this year and will probably reach an additional 4,000 this year. They responded to six calls for fire.
- The Department is grateful to Council for providing funds to maintain and update equipment needs. The Flock Camera System is a license plate reader that checks cars entering and leaving the city. The main goal was to put cameras in the parks for the safety of the children. The 22 cameras throughout the city have made a big difference in locating suspects.
- Removal of guns from individuals was up this year at 12, and there were 6 cases of shots fired.
- Assistant Chief Rob Griefenstine was acknowledged for his support, professionalism, and that he could step in at any time and perform the duties of Chief.
- Amount of time invested in cases:
  - Initial response to investigations: 4 - 2 hours
  - Analysis: 5 – 30 hours
  - Interrogation and interviewing: 4 - 12 hours
  - Investigations, leads, and follow-up work: 10 - 50 hours
  - Search warrant, court orders: 8 hours
  - Case review and documentation: 5 - 20 hours
  - Time estimated for arrest and booking: 4 - 8 hours
  - Low complexity cases: 50 - 150 hours
  - Moderate complexity cases: 100 - 300 hours
  - High complexity cases: 300 - 600 hours
- Updates for the MARCS radio system will take three to four months at a cost of \$254,000.
- All municipalities are experiencing low turnout for entry level police exams. The National Testing Network is being utilized and responses are much better. There are seven candidates, two are moving forward in the hiring process and one position will become open in a month when Lt. Brian Williams retires after 25 years of service.
- National Police Week is May 11<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> to honor the service of all police officers in American and the sacrifices they made. Every 53-54 hours an officer is lost.

Regular

May 12, 2025

- Ontario Officer Dillon Baily was shot three times in the line of duty on February 11, 2023. The process was long and complex because it isn't designed to bring an officer back to work, but the Mayor, Service-Safety Director and Council worked diligently to make that happen and brought him back as an Administrative Detective. The new service dog, Tilly, provides support for Officer Baily.

#### **LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- No report.

#### **RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Spencer recognized the School Board and Superintendent for the work they do and for the partnership they have with the city. The audience joined in singing Happy Birthday to Superintendent Strickler.

Mr. Spencer reported:

- The 4<sup>th</sup> of July Festival is a 3-day event. On Friday evening is a band and car show, Saturday morning begins with the 5-K, raffle tickets will be sold to win an electric car, and the evening ends with the fireworks sponsored by the Niss family. The city is thankful for what this family does for our community. Volunteers are needed for the festival.
- Summer Rec is a Monday-Thursday event at the school. Student interviews begin tomorrow.
- Concerts in the Park will kick off the first performance with Conne.
- Soccer Boot Camp draws over 100 children each year. The Monday – Thursday program is all day.
- Yoga sessions will be held alternating weeks with the concerts. Both activities are at the bandshell.
- Warrior Pickleball is new this year. Ontario will have three teams, Mansfield, Shelby, and Lexington each have a couple of teams. This will be a traveling pickleball league. A youth pickleball league could be started if there is enough interest.
- Until a couple of years ago the Miss Ontario pageant was struggling. The Eddie Gallo family has revised the program.
  - President Gallo said the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Festival kicks off on Wednesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, when seventeen girls will participate for Little and Junior Miss Ontario. On Sunday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, fourteen girls in 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade will vie for Miss Ontario. Last year \$4,200 was awarded to contestants. Volunteers are needed to work backstage.
- The OYS report will be presented at the next Council meeting.

#### **ZONING INSPECTOR'S REPORT**

Inspector Hall provided tentative dates for new restaurants opening in Ontario:

- East of Chicago – June 7<sup>th</sup> weekend, previous Buffalo Wild Wings location on W. 4<sup>th</sup> St.
- Raising Cane's – July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend, Lex-Springmill/W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, previously Denney's.
- Wing Stop – August 1<sup>st</sup>, next to 5 Guys
- Starbucks – Labor Day weekend, Briggs Drive across from Home Depot

The Ontario Zoning Map was displayed and the various types of districts were explained.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**

Mayor Knapp and President Gallo acknowledged local media WMFD and Richland Source by thanking them for covering community events for the school and the city.

Regular

May 12, 2025

## **PUBLIC COMMENTARY**

President Gallo responded to student's questions:

1. The status of a business occupying the vacant Cheddar's Restaurant.  
The owner of the Cheddar's building did not extend their lease and pursued an agreement for a GetGo gas station owned by Giant Eagle that later halted all projects.
2. A place for the youth of the community to gather and socialize.  
The owner of the Ontario Center (former Richland Mall) is working on plans to add gathering areas for youth and families.
3. Community Pool.  
Several years ago, a pool venue was considered but it was not accepted by the voters. It was a large project that not only included a pool but also a community center and soccer facility. A community pool is something they are looking at that would be an addition to the Splash Pad.

## **CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTION**

### **ORDINANCE NO. 25-11**

(THIRD READING) AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY AND CHARTER NEXT GENERATION, INC., ALLOWING THE MAYOR TO SIGN THE AMENDMENT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Bradley read Ordinance No. 25-11 for the third time, by title only.

Mr. Bradley moved to adopt Ordinance 25-11, second by Mr. Sunderland.

At roll call, four members voted Aye, zero Nay, one Abstain by Mr. Rehfeldt, and Ordinance No. 25-11 was adopted.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 25-05**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO BE NAMED MAYOR FOR THE DAY, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Webb moved to suspend the reading of Resolution No. 25-05 on three separate days, second by Mr. Sapp. Five members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed.

Mr. Sapp read Resolution No. 25-05, for the first time, by title only.

Mr. Sapp moved to adopt Resolution No. 25-05, second by Mr. Sunderland.

Five members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Resolution No. 25-05 was adopted.

At 9:59 a.m., there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Mr. Webb, second by Mr. Sapp.

/s/ Edward J. Gallo, President of Council

/s/ Cathy VanAuker, Clerk of Council