

Regular

August 20, 2025

Ontario City Council met in regular session on August 20, 2025, at the Municipal Building with Council President Eddie Gallo presiding. The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present during roll call were Council members Troy Sapp, Dave Rehfeldt, Kyle Webb, Josh Bradley, Sherry Branham-Fonner, Rose Feagin, Nathan Sunderland, Council President Eddie Gallo, Mayor Kris Knapp, Law Director Andrew Medwid, Service-Safety Director Adam Gongwer, and Clerk of Council Cathy VanAuker.

The minutes of the regular Council meeting of August 8, 2025 were presented for approval. Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Sapp reported on the Parks Committee of the Whole meeting held this evening.

- The second sign-off for the military tank was received from the government. They are looking into grant opportunities from ODNR and local military entities that would aide in the memorial dedication at the festival next year. High school students may do some renderings for the memorial.
- Recreation Director Kenn Spencer proposed June 26th and 27th for the 4th of July Festival next year. The Festival Committee would like the event to always be the Saturday before the 4th of July.
- More discussions are needed on adding parking near the baseball/softball fields.

Mr. Sapp will contact the Law Director about preparing legislation for the next meeting that would support officers for writing tickets when vehicles are parked in the grass.

Mr. Bradley's report on the Ontario Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) is attached to these minutes.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Knapp said Recreation Director Kenn Spencer gave his report during Caucus but is still available if there are any questions for him.

SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

No report.

LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT

No report.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Craig Hunt, 3680 Park Avenue West, asked for clarification on the Home Road culvert repair, and said the culvert exiting Marshall Park onto Rock Road is filling up with gravel.

- The east side of Home Road is Mansfield and the west side is Ontario. Each city was assigned a full culvert to simplify responsibilities when repairs are needed.
- The Marshall Park culvert will be checked.

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Cody Zigler, 100 Hilltop Road, referenced page 59 of the Comprehensive Plan regarding adjusting the minimum lot sizes in residential districts and maximizing building coverages. He would like this checked to ensure there won't be any problems with future lot sizes.

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTION

ORDINANCE NO. 25-17

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING WAGES AND SALARIES FOR NON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES OF THIS CITY, REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 24-30, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Sapp read Ordinance No. 25-17, for the third time, by title only.
Mr. Sapp moved to adopt Ordinance No. 25-17, second by Mr. Sunderland.
Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Ordinance No. 25-17 was adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 25-08

A RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO KYLE WEBB FOR HIS SERVICE OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS TO THE CITY OF ONTARIO, OHIO.

Mr. Rehfeldt moved to suspend the reading of Resolution No. 25-08 on three separate days, second by Mr. Sapp. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed.
Mr. Rehfeldt read Resolution No. 25-08 in its entirety, for the first time.

Mr. Rehfeldt moved to adopt Resolution No. 25-08, second by Mr. Sapp.
Six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, one Abstain by Mr. Webb, and Resolution No. 25-08 was adopted.

At 7:19 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Mrs. Branham-Fonner, second by Mr. Sapp.

/s/ Nathan Sunderland
Council President Pro Tem

/s/ Cathy VanAuker, Clerk of Council

Ontario Community Improvement Corporation Report

I'd like to provide a detailed update on the work of the Ontario Community Improvement Corporation.

Earlier this month, the CIC held a four-hour strategic planning session. The purpose of this session was twofold: first, to make sure board members are fully aware of the powers available to the CIC under the Ohio Revised Code, and second, to begin charting a course for how the CIC can be a tool for both community and economic development here in Ontario. The discussion was guided by the city's comprehensive plan, and the result was a clear set of short-term and long-term priorities.

Short-Term Priorities

1. Signage and Beautification – “Welcome to Ontario.”

A working committee, led by Amy Hiner and Jennifer Meisse, will focus on how the CIC can partner with the city on new signage and beautification efforts. This will include:

- Aligning with upcoming park signage and wayfinding plans.
- Exploring opportunities to tie into county branding efforts.
- Improving entrances to the city to create a strong first impression.
- Enhancing city-owned properties.
- Launching a marketing campaign and website that engages the community and tells Ontario's story.

2. Old Ontario Redevelopment.

The full board will take part in this initiative. The CIC is looking at opportunities for potential property acquisition and the redevelopment of strategic sites in Old Ontario. The goal is to create a true gathering place — a hub where residents and visitors can connect, and where small businesses can thrive. This initiative has the potential to breathe new life into the historic heart of our community.

Long-Term Goals

Looking further out, the CIC is keeping its focus on **strategic property acquisition** throughout the city — properties that could be redeveloped for commercial, industrial, or mixed-use projects. While immediate wins are important, the board is committed to ensuring that every step taken today supports the long-term economic vitality of Ontario.

Overarching Strategies

In addition to these priorities, the board identified two strategies that will guide all of its work:

- Developing both short- and long-term funding strategies to support projects.

- Creating a strong community engagement process so that residents, businesses, and stakeholders have a voice in shaping development.

Board Organization

The CIC also completed its officer elections:

- Chair: Amy Hiner
- Vice Chair: Nick Turnbaugh
- Secretary: Beth Delaney, with Jessica continuing to assist with meeting minutes
- Treasurer: Paul Boggs, elected in absentia and later confirmed

All officer positions were unanimously approved.

To ensure stability, the board also assigned staggered term lengths:

- Group 1: Amy Hiner and Beth Delaney, terms expire December 31, 2026
- Group 2: Vacant and Nick Turnbaugh, terms expire in 2027
- Group 3: Jennifer Meisse and Paul Boggs, terms expire in 2028

Board members may serve three consecutive three-year terms before taking a one-year break. Public sector representatives, including city officials, are not subject to term limits.

Closing

In summary, the Ontario CIC has set a clear direction. The board is organized, energized, and committed to aligning its efforts with the city's comprehensive plan. By focusing on short-term wins, such as signage and beautification, while also preparing for long-term redevelopment opportunities, the CIC is positioning itself to be an effective tool for economic development and community growth.

The work ahead will require collaboration — with council, with city administration, and most importantly, with our residents and business community. The CIC is ready to play that role, and I look forward to providing continued updates as these priorities move from planning to action.

Thank you.