

Regular

November 19, 2025

Ontario City Council met in regular session on November 19, 2025, at the Municipal Building with Council President Pro Tem Nathan Sunderland presiding. The meeting opened at 7:05 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present during roll call were Council members Troy Sapp, Dave Rehfeldt, Jason Bilyj, Josh Bradley, Sherry Branham-Fonner, Council President Pro Tem Nathan Sunderland, Mayor Kris Knapp, Law Director Andrew Medwid, Service-Safety Director Adam Gongwer, Clerk of Council Cathy VanAuker, and Assistant Clerk of Council Abbey Beaver.

The minutes of the regular Council meeting of November 5, 2025 were presented for approval. Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Rehfeldt reminded everyone about the Finance Committee meeting on December 3, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the budget.

Mrs. Branham-Fonner called a Personnel Committee meeting of the Whole for December 17, 2025 at 5:45 p.m.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Knapp reported:

- The Christmas Tree Lighting will be on December 4, 2025 at Marshall Park, with festivities beginning at 5:45 p.m. He thanked the school, Recreation Director Spencer and the Lions Club for their help.
- New Directional signs are in the park and electronic message signs will be installed at Shelby-Ontario Road and Rock Road.
- The sidewalk project that is part of the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) grant and not the Safe Route to School Project, was moved up from 2027 to 2026 due to funds available in their 2026 budget. ODOT will pay 80% of the project cost for sidewalks north of the high school toward Zimmerman Lane.
- Extra funds were received from Regional Planning to lower the OPWC loan by \$25,000 for the sewer line project on Park Avenue West, from Rock Road east to the State Route 430 split.

SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Gongwer provided updates:

- Fuel bids for 2026 will be opened December 2, 2025.
- The power outage on November 15, 2025 was due to a vehicle hitting a pole on Park Avenue in front of the Area Agency on Aging. The City's building generator went out but they did get some lights and radios working in dispatch. With help from the Street Department and Sewer Department, roads were closed and information posted on social media. The power company restored electricity within three to four hours.

Mr. Sunderland asked about the progress on Mansfield grading the Walker Lake and Home Road intersection. They were doing ditch lines but not much grading in the area.

- Mr. Gongwer reported there was an OOPS request over a month ago for the hillside but no work since. Mayor Knapp advised there was a utility, possibly fiber optic cable, that needed to be moved before anything could be done. Mr. Sunderland requested contact be made with Mansfield to get an update on this project.

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LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT

No report.

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

The Ohio Division of Liquor Control submitted an annual Liquor Permit Renewal. Chief Hill confirmed there were no objections to any liquor permit renewals in the city.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Mark Vanerio, 1883 Walker Lake Road, said all of the trees had been replaced on the hill next to his property. They look healthy this time and look like they will grow to hide the buildings. He thanked the city for their help.

PUBLIC HEARING

At 7:18 p.m., the Public Hearing was opened for the rezone of six parcels on S. Lexington Springmill Road from R-1 (Low Density Residential) to OS (Office Services). Planning Commission voted against this rezone.

- Signed in to express their views against the rezone requests:
Jill Knight 28 Creston Road; Jim Marshall 69 Creston Road; Bob Naugle 93 S. Lexington Springmill Road; John M. McMillen 141 Creston Road; Diana Diglaw 138 Creston Road.
- Emailed or left voicemails to express their views against the rezone request:
Bertram Martin; Ashley Martin; Kathy Benigck; Kim and Steve Geary; Tony and Jackie Duncan.
- J. Steve Sheldon 50 Lynn Drive spoke in favor of the rezone.

At 7:35 p.m., seeing no one else who wished to speak, the Public Hearing was closed.

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTION

ORDINANCE NO. 25-26

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN A DEED ON BEHALF OF THE CITY TO DONATE REAL ESTATE TO THE ONTARIO COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION THAT IS UNNEEDED AND HOLDS NO ECONOMIC VALUE TO THE CITY, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Bilyj moved to suspend the reading of Ordinance No. 25-26 on three separate days, second by Mr. Sapp. Six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mr. Bradley read Ordinance No. 25-26, for the second time, by title only.

Mr. Bradley moved to adopt Ordinance No. 25-26, second by Mrs. Branham-Fonner. Six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Ordinance No. 25-26 was adopted.

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ORDINANCE NO. 25-27

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF ONTARIO, OHIO FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2026 AND EXPIRING DECEMBER 31,2026.

Mrs. Branham-Fonner read Ordinance No. 25-27, for the second time, by title only.

ORDINANCE NO. 25-28

AN ORDINANCE REZONING SIX (6) PARCELS ON SOUTH LEXINGTON-SPRINGMILL ROAD FROM R1 – LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT TO OS – OFFICE SERVICE DISTRICT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Rehfeldt read Ordinance No. 25-28, for the first time, by title only.

At 7:38 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Mrs. Branham-Fonner, second by Mr. Bradley.

Nathan Sunderland
President of Council Pro Tem

Cathy VanAuker, Clerk of Council