

Regular

May 6, 2026

Ontario City Council met in regular session on May 6, 2026, at the Municipal Building with Council President Eddie Gallo presiding. The meeting opened at 7:01 p.m. with a moment of reflection for the passing of Army Veteran Ashland Butcher followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present during roll call were Council members Brennen Finfgeld, Rick Pauley, Anderson Roll, Jason Bilyj, Sherry Branham-Fonner, Rose Feagin, Nathan Sunderland; President Eddie Gallo, Mayor Josh Bradley, Law Director Andrew Medwid, Service-Safety Director Michael Morton, Clerk of Council Cathy VanAuker, and Assistant Clerk of Council Abbey Beaver.

The minutes of the regular Council meeting of April 15, 2026, were presented for approval. Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Finfgeld said the Utilities Committee met to discuss the Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project. This will be a continuation from last year in the Chambers Rd and Millsboro Rd area.

Ms. Feagin rescheduled tonight's Parks Committee meeting for June 3, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. to form a Veterans Memorial Advisory Committee.

MAYOR'S REPORT

President Gallo recognized Mayor Bradley for leading students during the Spring Cleanup around Lexington Springmill and Walker Lake Rd.

Mayor Bradley reported:

- The Ohio Health and Nationwide groundbreaking for a new 42,000 sq ft facility was today. This is a \$38.4 million construction project. The facility will provide Specialty Clinics, Laboratory Services, Radiology, Audiology, Clinical Therapies, and Primary Care.
- The City is taking applications for summer employment. This is a temporary part-time position tentatively beginning after Memorial Day and ending around Labor Day.
- Hometown Hero banners are being hung. The goal is to have them all up by the end of the week.
- New appliances have been installed at the Senior Center. It is very close to completion for rentals.
- Spring Cleanup went well this year. Special thanks to Charter Next Gen for donating the bags, Culver's for donating ice cream to all the students, Mrs. Johnson for participation in the event, and the Street Department for collection and disposal of the bags.
- Pioneer Community Service Day was a success. He thanked all the students that came out to spread mulch and clean up Marshall Park.
- They are in the process of applying for the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant.
 - The SS4A program funds local and regional initiatives through grants to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries.
 - There are two main types, we are applying for the Planning and Demonstration Grants.
 - This was recommended through our Comprehensive Plan and is needed for eligibility for certain Capital Improvement Grants. It will give Ontario an edge during the competitive selection process.

SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Morton advised:

- Water Well 1 is operational with a new motor. The old motor was rebuilt for a backup if one fails, the motors for our wells are interchangeable. The backup motor can be installed while removing the failed motor so there is no interruption in service.

Regular

May 6, 2026

- Bid opening for the 2026 Resurfacing project was April 23rd. Lowest and best bid was awarded to Sarver Paving in the amount of \$485,674.00. Their bid was \$88,000.00 less than estimated.
- All Service Department staff completed the required CPR and First Aid training.
- All Supervisors and Streets Foreman are scheduled for OSHA 10 training. This training is free provided by BWC and LTAP (an ODOT program). Topics include fall protection, hazard recognition, electrical safety, and roadwork safety.
- Construction for the waterline project will start May 11th on Lexington Springmill and will be completed before moving to Maple Ln. There will be temporary lane closures during the day and in the evening.

LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT

No report.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORT

President Gallo reminded volunteers and sponsors are needed for the Liberty Fest and all summer events through Ontario Community Events.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Bradley Swain, 5514 Lime Rd, expressed interest in being on the Veterans Memorial Advisory Panel. He provided past and present involvement in activities and organizations. He recently enlisted in the Army National Guard.

Mark Vanerio, 1883 Walker Lake Rd, asked about the moratorium for Data Centers and if the City has been approached about one.

- President Gallo advised that one property owner was approached but there was no infrastructure for this. The moratorium gives the City protection for a short period of time and can be revisited.
- Director Morton added due to what happened in the neighboring city there are legitimate concerns about the effects of Data Centers. The State passed House Bill 646 to create a Data Center Study Commission, they will study energy use on the power grid and environmental concerns to try to regulate them. He would like to see the findings before decisions are made.

Troy Sapp, 297 Camelot Ln, inquired about what changed Council's stance on where the Service-Safety Director is required to reside. He was on Council last year and everyone agreed that the previous Director was to live within City limits.

- Mayor Bradley explained this was briefly brought up by the previous Mayor. The previous Service-Safety Director never requested discussion or a vote.
- Mr. Pauley advised the Chief of Police, who does not live in the City, and Department Heads are competent enough to do their job before contacting the Service-Safety Director. Qualified applicants are limited if requiring them to live in the City when they serve at the pleasure of the Mayor.
- Mr. Roll said if the Bill at the State level passes to abolish required residency, it will change anyway.

Robin Vanerio, 1883 Walker Lake Rd, addressed Council showing support to waive the residency requirement for the Service-Safety Director.

Craig Hunt, 3680 Park Avenue West, said House Bill 428 passed in the House of Representatives unanimously, he believes it will pass the Senate. He expressed support for Director Morton and waiving the residency requirement.

Regular

May 6, 2026

Mrs. Branham-Fonner stated Mayor Bradley explained Director Morton's skills and experiences to her. She had confidence in the Director before she met him along with confidence in the Mayor and his opinions.

Barbara Reeder, 145 Clare Rd, said she works with Director Morton daily, she has never had a problem getting ahold of him if he is not in the building. He is dependable, reliable, and the employees back him.

Kenn Spencer, 850 E. Debbie Ln, expressed that Director Morton has always been available and helped get things done in the park. The job description needs changed and should have been last year. He appreciates the Mayor for fighting for his Director. Things have changed since Ontario became a City.

Law Director Medwid explained from a legal position the State has not passed the proposed law as of today and this is a blanket waiver of residency, it is not just for the current Director, it will change the City's law.

President Gallo gave history of past Directors and past requests about residency requirements.

Mayor Bradley noted that Director Morton requested the waiver of residency requirement in public during a meeting and not in executive session. We cannot keep doing what people in past have done.

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTION

ORDINANCE NO. 26-11

AN ORDINANCE WAIVING THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR BE A RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF ONTARIO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Finfgeld read Ordinance No. 26-11, for the third time, by title only.

Mr. Roll moved to adopt Ordinance No. 26-11, second by Mr. Bilyj.

Five members cast their votes Aye, two Nay by Ms. Feagin and Mr. Sunderland, and the motion passed.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-12

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO PAY ONE HUNDRED FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$105,000) TO THE ONTARIO COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION TO PURCHASE REAL PROPERTY TO BE USED FOR THE PUBLIC, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Pauley moved to table Ordinance No. 26-12, second by Mr. Roll.

Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion to table Ordinance No. 26-12 passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-06

A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN.

Mr. Roll moved to suspend the reading of Resolution No. 26-06 on three separate days, second by Ms. Feagin. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mr. Roll read Resolution No. 26-06, for the first time, by title only.

Regular

May 6, 2026

Mr. Roll moved to adopt Resolution No. 26-06, second by Mrs. Branham-Fonner. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Resolution No. 26-06 was adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-07

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING A MEMBER TO THE RICHLAND COUNTY 9-1-1 REVIEW COMMITTEE PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE SECTION 128.06 (A).

Mr. Roll moved to suspend the reading of Resolution No. 26-07 on three separate days, second by Mr. Bilyj. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mr. Bilyj read Resolution No. 26-07, for the first time, by title only.

Mr. Bilyj moved to adopt Resolution No. 26-07, second by Mr. Roll. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Resolution No. 26-07 was adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-08

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE- SAFETY DIRECTOR TO ADVERTISE FOR COMPETITIVE BIDS AND AWARD A CONTRACT FOR THE 2026 CITY OF ONTARIO SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Roll moved to suspend the reading of Resolution No. 26-08 on three separate days, second by Mrs. Branham-Fonner. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Ms. Feagin read Resolution No. 26-08, for the first time, by title only.

Ms. Feagin moved to adopt Resolution No. 26-08, second by Mr. Roll. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Resolution No. 26-08 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-13

AN ORDINANCE IMPOSING A SIX (6) MONTH MORATORIUM ON THE ACCEPTANCE, CONSIDERATION AND/OR GRANTING OF ANY APPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL LICENSING APPROVAL, AND/OR ANY ZONING, OCCUPANCY, OR OTHER PERMITS RELATING TO DATA CENTERS SUPPORTING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WITHIN THE CITY OF ONTARIO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Roll moved to suspend the reading of Ordinance No. 26-13 on three separate days, second by Mr. Finfgeld. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mr. Sunderland read Ordinance No. 26-13, for the first time, by title only.

Mrs. Branham-Fonner moved to adopt Ordinance No. 26-13, second by Ms. Feagin. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Ordinance No. 26-13 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-14

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR OR HIS DESIGNEE (CHIEF OF POLICE) TO DONATE UNNEEDED AND OBSOLETE UNCLAIMED PROPERTY FROM THE POLICE EVIDENCE ROOM, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Regular

May 6, 2026

Mr. Roll moved to suspend the reading of Ordinance No. 26-14 on three separate days, second by Mr. Bilyj. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mr. Finfgeld read Ordinance No. 26-14, for the first time, by title only.

Mr. Finfgeld moved to adopt Ordinance No. 26-14, second by Mr. Roll. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Ordinance No. 26-14 was adopted.

At 7:55 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Mr. Roll, second by Mrs. Branham-Fonner.

/s/ Eddie Gallo, President of Council

/s/ Cathy VanAuker, Clerk of Council