

Regular

May 20, 2026

Ontario City Council met in regular session on May 20, 2026, 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 Brennen Finfgeld, Rick Pauley, Anderson Roll, Jason Bilyj, 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. Excused: Sherry Branham-Fonner.

The minutes of the regular Council meeting of May 6, 2026, were presented for approval. Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

Gary Schroeder from Mansfield Power Squadron came forward to receive a Proclamation for National Safe Boating Week.

National Safe Boating Week

WHEREAS, for over 100 million Americans, boating continues to be a popular recreational activity. From coast to coast, and everywhere in between, people are taking to the water and enjoying time together boating, sailing, paddling and fishing. During National Safe Boating Week, the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Safe Boating Council, along with federal, state, and local safe boating partners encourage all boaters to explore and enjoy America's beautiful waters responsibly; and

WHEREAS, safe boating begins with preparation. The Coast Guard estimates that human error accounts for most boating accidents and that life jackets could prevent nearly 75 percent of boating fatalities. Through basic boating safety procedures – carrying lifesaving emergency distress and communications equipment, wearing life jackets, attending safe boating courses, participating in free boat safety checks, and staying sober when navigating – we can help ensure boaters on America's coastal, inland, and offshore waters stay safe throughout the season; and

WHEREAS, National Safe Boating Week is observed to bring attention to important life-saving tips for recreational boaters so that they can have a safer, more fun experience out on the water throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, on average, 650 people die each year in boating-related accidents in the U.S.; 75 percent of these are fatalities caused by drowning; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of these accidents are caused by human error or poor judgment and not by the boat, equipment or environmental factors; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of boaters who lose their lives by drowning each year would be alive today had they worn their life jackets.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Josh Bradley, Mayor of Ontario, along with the City of Ontario do hereby support the goals of the Safe Boating Campaign and proclaim May 16-22, 2026, as National Safe Boating Week and the start of the year-round effort to promote safe boating. I urge all of those who boat to practice safe boating habits and wear a life jacket at all times while boating.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my Hand and caused the seal this 20th day of May in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six.

Josh Bradley, Mayor

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Pauley announced Jody Orewiler, Streets Department Supervisor, was appointed as the City Representative to Community Improvement Corporation (CIC). An on-site Economic Development meeting of the Whole on June 17th was scheduled at 5:00 p.m. at the new construction on Clare Rd. Wigton/Holden Construction would like to show their craftsmanship.

Mr. Bilyj scheduled a Finance Committee meeting for June 17th at 6:00 p.m.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Bradley reported:

- In January an application was submitted for a federal grant through the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) with the assistance of Richland County Regional Planning and K.E. McCartney. The City was awarded this grant and will receive \$160,000.
 - This is a 90/10 grant. The City will be responsible for 10% of the total project, which is \$16,000.
 - The project will study the intersection of Lexington Springmill and Walker Lake Road for safety and operational deficiencies.
 - The study will recommend improvements and operational control including updated signal systems, additional and/or lengthened turn lanes, approach signing, and pedestrian improvements.
 - Our next step will be authorization and instructions to post a request for quotes for consultant selection.
- The Safe Routes for All grant is currently being worked on and is scheduled to be submitted by the deadline at the end of the month.
- We should know within the next few weeks about the Safe Route for Schools grant. If we are awarded this grant we could get up to a million dollars a year for five years.
- The invoice for design work regarding the site in the park by the tank was received on April 27th and payment was issued on April 30th.
 - The original invoice was \$34,500. It was requested the invoice be updated to only reflect completed work, the new total was \$18,605.
 - The concept plans have been forwarded to the Parks Committee.
- We are currently seeking quotes for seal coating in the parks. This needs to be done to extend the life of our parking lots and sports facilities. The Streets Department will complete the crack-sealing portion of the project to save money.
- The Parks Supervisor advised there was an emergency by the fields a few weeks ago. Some bystanders had to push the large rocks out of the way for EMS to get through. This is a safety issue that needs to be addressed, possibly with permanent bollards and retractable bollards that could be accessed by a Knox box.
- The Senior Center is complete other than the drinking fountain and a couple of door locks that need changed. He would like Council to set the rate for rental.

Mr. Sunderland said the influx of traffic on Lexington Springmill going south turning onto Route 30 East has the turn lane backed up almost to Walker Lake Road due to red lights. He would like to reconfigure the timing on the lights.

Recreation Director Kenn Spencer advised the handicap parking at the park by the ball fields is not safe. He would like to see more handicap spots away from the walkway. When the spots are full people are parking in the grass.

President Gallo would like the Parks Committee to look at all the issues, the ADA parking, the rocks and bollard issue, and possible delays of EMS getting to kids. Parks and Safety need to collaborate quickly to resolve the issues.

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SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Morton advised:

- Summer help interviews will be conducted this week. There were about 20 applicants.
- The Lexington Springmill waterline is installed. It still needs pressure tested and treated before service.
- Maple Lane waterline has been tapped onto Park Avenue West The pipe will be going in the ground next week. Estimated completion of the project is the last week of June.
- The NAMI 5K Run will be held at Marshall Park on May 30th at 9:00 a.m. Some roads will be closed during the event.
- On June 1st the Raising Cane's water tower will be drained to perform interior maintenance. The scope includes cleaning and recoating the interior with epoxy.

Mr. Roll said his neighbor at 1627 Lindaire Lane E. asked if the streetlight could be named after the mayor that was able to get it installed. Director Morton advised we do not own the utility pole, she would need to contact Ohio Edison for permission.

Mr. Bilyj inquired if the parking lot for the strip mall by Walmart could become a priority to get fixed. It is becoming a safety hazard. Mayor Bradley confirmed there is an Ordinance that addresses this and they will contact the owner.

LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT

No report.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORT

President Gallo thanked Recreation Director Kenn Spencer and all those involved with coordinating the Senior Prom event.

Mayor Bradley asked about sponsors for the Miss Ontario event. President Gallo will get information on the level of sponsorships to those who want it. He listed some events where the girls have represented the City.

President Gallo stated a decision will be made on June 3rd about the July Council meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Mark Vanerio, 1883 Walker Lake Rd, read an article that listed concerning findings about Data Centers.

Recreation Director Kenn Spencer, 850 E. Debbie Lane, recognized Springfield Township Fire Department for their quick response to the ball fields. The Police Department put a LifeVac in the concession stand without being asked.

Craig Hunt, 3680 Park Avenue West, said the emergency squad could back up to the rocks and walk down with the cot to the fields. He doesn't understand why the field barriers need changed.

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTION

No legislation was presented.

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At 7:48 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Ms. Feagin, second by Mr. Sunderland.

/s/ Cathy VanAuker, Clerk of Council

/s/ Eddie Gallo, President of Council