

Regular

September 2, 2026

Ontario City Council met in regular session on September 2, 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, Sherry Branham-Fonner, 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 August 19, 2026, were presented for approval. Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

President Gallo congratulated Mr. Roll on being named to the Forge Academy of Leadership to serve until August 2027 and being named to the Black Conservative Federation for another term serving September 2026 through August 2027.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Roll said the Streets Committee met today to discuss:

- The Walker Lake Road intersection study and established a committee to review the engineering proposals.
- The additional streets for the upcoming paving bids.

Mr. Sunderland called a Safety Committee meeting of the Whole for September 16, 2026, at 5:15 p.m. to include Ontario Police Department and Ontario School Board.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Bradley reported:

- All demolition permits have been submitted for the house at the corner of Park Avenue West and Shelby Ontario Road.
 - The water and gas have been disconnected.
 - The electric certificate of abandonment will be verified by the end of the week.
 - There will be a pre-demolition meeting soon.
 - An intersection study will be done to determine the best way to improve the flow of traffic.
 - He thanked members of the Ontario Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) for their assistance with the project and members of Council for their willingness to approve legislation to make this project possible.
- The partially constructed church at 1943 Park Avenue West will be demolished starting Friday. He thanked Dan and Brenda Niss for purchasing the property and removing the structure.
- He complimented Cathy VanAuker for the work she performed for the City.

Clerk of Council Cathy VanAuker came forward to receive a Proclamation:

Cathy VanAuker is retiring from her dedicated service to the City of Ontario after 21 years of commendable work as the Clerk of Council; and

WHEREAS, Cathy VanAuker was hired in 2005 by then President of Council, Dave Metzger with the approval of Personnel Committee chair, Matt Finfgeld during the term of Mayor Tom Durbin and Service Safety Director, Jim Hellinger; and

WHEREAS, throughout her tenure, Cathy VanAuker has demonstrated exceptional skill, leadership, and an unwavering commitment to keeping the records of our great City for our residents; and

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WHEREAS, her dedication to service has made Cathy VanAuker's tenure the longest of any administrative staff in our City, serving five Council Presidents and six Mayors; and

WHEREAS, Cathy VanAuker's daily presence, vast knowledge and kind heart will be deeply missed by her fellow workers, city officials, and the community alike; and

WHEREAS, Cathy will now be spending her days enjoying time with her beloved grandchildren and traveling with her husband throughout the United States, accomplishing in 2027 the impressive achievement of visiting all 50 states; and

WHEREAS, as Cathy embarks on a much-deserved retirement, I, Josh Bradley, the Mayor of the City of Ontario, ask all residents and employees to join me in congratulating Cathy VanAuker on an outstanding twenty-one years of service and wishing her many continued years of happiness and good health.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Josh Bradley, by virtue of the authority invested in me as Mayor of Ontario, do hereby recognize Cathy VanAuker's retirement on September 16, 2026, and join with the City Staff, residents and City Council to extend our appreciation and gratitude to Cathy for her hard work, kind spirit and commitment to excellence over the past twenty-one years. Cathy, you will be truly missed by all of us.

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

Josh Bradley, Mayor

Gianna Gallo, Program Director for Miss Ontario Pageant, came forward to show gratitude to Cathy VanAuker for all her involvement and support with the Miss Ontario program. Mrs. VanAuker has been part of 19 Miss Ontario Pageants as well as four Little and Junior Miss Ontario Pageants. Ms. Gallo bestowed honorary membership of the Former Miss Ontario Club to Mrs. VanAuker.

Randy Hutchinson, former Mayor, expressed appreciation for Mrs. VanAuker during his time as Mayor and congratulated her on her retirement.

Kris Knapp, former Service-Safety Director and Mayor, addressed Mrs. VanAuker with gratitude for keeping him prepared during his time with the City.

Matt Finfgeld, former Councilmember and Chair of the Personnel Committee who hired Cathy VanAuker, expressed honor working with her.

Mark Weidemyre, former Councilmember, shared about Mrs. VanAuker when he was President Pro Tem and his appreciation for her work.

Bill Flanigan, former Streets Department employee, said he is grateful for conversations with Mrs. VanAuker and wished her a long and healthy retirement.

Jay Hriesik, Sewer Department Head, congratulated Mrs. VanAuker on her retirement.

SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Morton advised:

- The second phase resurfacing bid opening is September 10th at 10:30 a.m. in the Community Room.
- Items from all departments that are no longer useful are being collected to advertise for sale on Gov Deals by the end of the month.
- Richland County received their salt bid last Thursday. The City reserved salt at \$93.18 per ton and ordered 1,200 tons. We are required to purchase 90% of the 1,200 tons and can purchase up to 10% more of what we ordered.

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- Smoke testing is 85% complete and should be finished this week. Further investigation has started into the known areas of concern.
- He congratulated Josh Goddard in the Water Department for passing his Class I Water Supply License examination on his first attempt and Brandon McCunn in the Sewer Department for passing his Class II Water Reclamation License examination with an exceptional score.

Mr. Bilyj asked about the difference in salt bid pricing from the previous year. Director Morton advised it is about \$48.00 more per ton this year.

LAW DIRECTOR’S REPORT

No report.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORT

Mrs. Branham-Fonner moved to appoint Abbey Beaver as the Clerk of Council for the City of Ontario effective September 17, 2026, second by Mr. Sunderland. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion to appoint Abbey Beaver as the Clerk of Council passed.

Mr. Pauley inquired about the progress for the list of veterans who want to be involved with the Veterans Memorial. Ms. Feagin is compiling a workbook with those names and has been in contact with Retired Colonel Ken Kmetz.

Mr. Roll attended the ribbon cutting for City Care Counseling Center today. They provide mental health care, psychiatric support, and educational resources.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Craig Hunt, 3680 Park Avenue West, thanked Mrs. VanAuker for all the effort and work she has done through the years. He appreciates everything she has done for him and the City.

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTION

ORDINANCE NO. 26-22

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.

Mr. Bilyj read Ordinance No. 26-22, for the third time, by title only.

Mr. Bilyj moved to adopt Ordinance No. 26-22, second by Mr. Sunderland. Seven members cast their votes, zero Aye, seven Nay, and Ordinance No. 26-22 failed.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-23

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR, OR HIS DESIGNEE (THE CHIEF OF POLICE), TO ACCEPT A DONATION FROM THE GORMAN FAMILY FOUNDATION TO THE CITY OF ONTARIO POLICE DEPARTMENT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Roll moved to suspend the reading of Ordinance No. 26-23 on three separate days, second by Mr. Bilyj. Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mrs. Branham-Fonner read Ordinance No. 26-23, for the second time, by title only.

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Mrs. Branham-Fonner moved to adopt Ordinance No. 26-23, second by Mr. Roll.
Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Ordinance No. 26-23 was adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-16

A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE FIVE YEAR UPDATE OF THE SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN OF RICHLAND COUNTY, OHIO.

Ms. Feagin read Resolution No. 26-16, for the first time, by title only.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-24

AN ORDINANCE CORRECTING AN UNIDENTIFIED PAYROLL ACCOUNT
RECONCILIATION, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Sunderland moved to suspend the reading of Ordinance No. 26-24 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. 26-24, for the first time, by title only.

Mr. Sunderland moved to adopt Ordinance No. 26-24, second by Mr. Roll.
Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Ordinance No. 26-24 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-25

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE VETERAN'S MEMORIAL PROJECT
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE CITY PARKS COMMITTEE TO CREATE A
VETERANS MEMORIAL, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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

Mr. Finfgeld moved to adopt Ordinance No. 26-25, second by Mr. Roll.
Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Ordinance No. 26-25 was adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-17

A RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO CATHY VANAUKER
FOR HER SERVICE OVER THE PAST TWENTY-ONE YEARS TO
THE CITY OF ONTARIO, OHIO.

Mrs. Beaver read Resolution No. 26-17.

Mr. Sunderland moved to adopt Resolution No. 26-17, second by Mr. Roll.
Seven members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Resolution No. 26-17 was adopted.

At 7:34 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a
motion by Mr. Sunderland, second by Mrs. Branham-Fonner.

/s/ Eddie Gallo, President of Council

/s/ Abbey Beaver, Assistant Clerk of Council