

November 14, 2024

City of Northwood
City Council Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular meeting of the Northwood City Council was called to order by Mayor Schimmel at 07:00 PM on November 14, 2024 in the Council Chambers and via Live Stream.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mayor Schimmel

Pledge of Allegiance was given.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called by Clerk of Council Popovitch and those in attendance were as follows: Mayor Schimmel, Council President Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Councilor Kozina, Councilor Stoner City Administrator Kevin Laughlin, City Attorney Brian Ballenger and City Engineer Dave Kuhn.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 7, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Councilor Stoner made a motion to **Approve**; seconded by Councilor Kozina. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** Council President Louis Fahrbach, Councilor Jim Barton
Result: Passed

PRESENTATION

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Audrey Caligiuri - 423 Ravenwood - Quoted the Mayor's last State of the City Address regarding the City's increased general fund revenue, overall financial standing and the reserve fund balance. Mrs. Caligiuri expressed concerns regarding the line item for dispatching services in the 2025 proposed budget. She stated that rather than making cuts/contracting services to the County, the city should be utilizing the "rainy day" fund. She questioned the justification in funding large projects such as the roundabout while considering making significant cuts in other areas such as dispatch. Mrs. Caligiuri shared her further apprehension of the verbal agreement proposed by the county, possible decrease in the quality of service provided, and negative effects the decision may have on bringing people into the city, more specifically at the Encalve.
2. Molly Tomaszewski - 211 Earl - Agreed with everything previously stated by Mrs. Caligiuri and asked for a show of hands who agreed with not taking away dispatch.

COMMUNICATIONS

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Economic Development Councilor Jim Barton

No Report.

Finance Council President Louis Fahrbach

No action taken on items discussed at the last meeting. Next meeting is scheduled for December 5th @ 6pm to discuss all budget matters and covering shortfalls with "rainy day" fund.

Recreation Board Councilor Jim Barton

Meeting held 11/13
Discussed:
- increasing fees for all sports, no action taken
- offering one color of pants for baseball and softball for all teams
- ways to improve the recreation program
- baseball, softball and spring soccer registrations will begin the second week of December.
- soccer camp in January at the NCC
- Christmas tree lighting December 4th at 6pm at the NCC
- Palooza in the Park possible dates of June 6th or 13th, working on coordinating fireworks at the event
- Fishing Derby 3rd week of July
Next meeting is scheduled for December 6th at 6pm at the NCC.

Safety Councilor Mark Stoner

No Report.

Tree Commission Councilor Michael Melnyk

Meeting held on November 11th
Discussed:

November 14, 2024

- recent tree planting at Brentwood Park & tree farm that was put in at Nature Trails
 - starting a Memorial Tree Program
 - working on Tree City USA application and the growth award.
- Next meeting is scheduled for January 14th at 6pm.

Service Councilor Dean Edwards - Next Meeting: November 14th @ 6:30P

Meeting held on November 14th at 6:30pm
Discussed:
- the potential roundabout. project estimated at \$5.5M, \$4M coming from grants. City would be responsible for \$1.5 over 4 years. City cost in 2025 would be \$275,000 No recommendation The item will be on the next meeting agenda for further discussion.

Parks, Rec & NCC Councilor Pat Huntermark

No Report.

Committee of the Whole Council President Louis Fahrbach

No Report.

CEREMONIAL ITEMS

None.

NEW RESOLUTION

PENDING RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION 2024-12 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD MAYOR, CITY ADMINISTRATOR, CITY CLERK AND FINANCE DIRECTOR TO OBTAIN A FAITHFUL PERFORMANCE INSURANCE POLICY TO REPLACE SURETY BONDS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **Suspend the rules**; seconded by Councilor Stoner. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Council President Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Councilor Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **Move on Emergency Clause**; seconded by Councilor Stoner.**ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Council President Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Councilor Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **Move on Final Adoption**; seconded by Councilor Stoner. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Council President Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Councilor Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
Result: Passed as emergency

RESOLUTION 2024-11 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPLY FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUNDS THROUGH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGREE TO OBLIGATE THE NECESSARY FUNDS TO COMPLETE THE PROJECT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **Move on Emergency Clause**; seconded by Councilor Melnyk. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Council President Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Councilor Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **Move on Final Adoption**; seconded by Councilor Melnyk.**ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Council President Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Councilor Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
Result: Passed as emergency

NEW LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE 2024-44 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH AETNA FOR HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
1sr Reading - Kozina

ORDINANCE 2024-45 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING INCREASING ESTIMATED RESOURCES OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
1st Reading - Fahrbach

ORDINANCE 2024-46 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
1st Reading - Fahrbach

PENDING LEGISLATON

November 14, 2024

ORDINANCE 2024-42 AN ORDINANCE IMPOSING A MORATORIUM UNTIL DECEMBER 1, 2025, ON THE GRANTING OF ANY PERMIT ALLOWING RETAIL DISPENSARIES, CULTIVATORS, OR ANY PROCESSORS OF RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA WITHIN THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD, OHIO; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

2nd REading - Fahrbach

ORDINANCE 2024-43 AN ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD, OHIO DURING THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025, AND ESTABLISHING ACCOUNTS THEREON; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

2nd Reading - Stoner

MAYOR Mayor Schimmel

Mayor's Report

Chief Whitmore presented the recommendation to hire Jaision Sterling as a recruit firefighter.

MOTION: Councilor Stoner made a motion to hire Jaision Sterling as a recruit firefighter; seconded by Councilor Kozina. **ROLL CALL:** Yes: Council President Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Councilor Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

Result: Passed

Discussion regarding the 2025 budget overall
The finance director, City Administrator and department heads worked together to propose a budget for consideration. Recommendations include some cuts, redistribution of the city's income tax revenue from capital replacement or improvements over to the general fund, and some use of our fund reserves. He stated we are in a much better position today than back in 2008-2009, partly because of all the companies we have attached over the years, and several more that are close to coming on board, or are currently working on new facilities. Mayor Schimmel shared project updates around the city including progress at 84 Lumbar, recent ARC approval for Wallick Senior Living with a tax value of up to around \$12M, continued traction for a large project across the street, phase two of the townhouses at the Enclave and apartments slated to start later winter/ early spring. Addressed councils concerns with the NCC not bringing in enough funds, but is hopeful that as development expands it will get closer to breaking even and noted that TIF payments are expected to start coming in next year. Mayor Schimmel congratulated council for the last 9 years of carryovers and asked council to consider passing the budget as submitted at the next council meeting.

In reference to dispatch Mayor Schimmel stated

- The City has been working on regional dispatch with neighboring communities for 17+ years. The City came close in 2008, but a couple of partners backed out at the last minute and went with the sheriff because the cost was so attractive. The city ultimately decided to keep dispatch.
- The City has been trying to form a regional fire district with several of our neighboring communities, most of which are already dispatched by the county, Perrysburg Township being the exception. By keeping Northwood dispatch, there would potentially be 3 separate dispatching services for one fire district. The Mayor stated he is willing to listen to ideas on how to make it work.
- The proposal to contract with the Sheriff did not come up as a big cost savings measure because of budget shortfalls, but rather to create a workable system for regional fire.
- If a neighboring community wanted to do a regional fire or dispatch, the city would consider and nothing is set in stone
- 98% of all cell phone calls are currently answered by the sheriff and if the services are that bad, the sheriff needs to be made aware

Mayor Schimmel concluded by stating we are going to continue talking to our neighbors and do what is best for the city.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR Kevin Laughlin

City Administrator's Report

TOPIC/ ITEM	DISCUSSION
5% cuts to departments' budget requests	Per the Finance Committee's recommendation at the November 7th meeting, each department was instructed to cut their budget requests by 5%. Cuts are listed below.

5% cuts to dept. budgets requested at Finance Comm Nov. 7, 2024

Will discuss at the Finance Committee meeting in December.

CITY FINANCIAL REPORT(S)

October bank reconciliation

MOTION: Councilor Barton made a motion to acknowledge receipt of the October City Financial Reports ; seconded by Councilor Kozina. **ROLL CALL:** Yes: Council President Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Councilor Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

Result: Passed

November 14, 2024

October monthly financial reports

LIST OF EXPENDITURES OVER \$10,000

Invoice	Description	Amount
MEDICAL MUTUAL	HEALTH & LIFE INSURANCE 12/1/24-1/1/25	\$70,531.14

MOTION: Councilor Kozina made a motion to **Approve** ; seconded by Councilor Melnyk. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Council President Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Councilor Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
Result: Passed

CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT/DISCUSSION Brian Ballenger

No Report.

CITY ENGINEER’S REPORT/DISCUSSION Dave Kuhn

City Engineer's Report

- 1) The Enclave – Contract A: Contractor is working on finishing the remaining punch list items. The final few trees have been marked will be planted in the next couple of weeks. The irrigation people are finishing fixing the breaks this week.
- 2) Wheeling & Curtice Intersection: This is complete except for installing the signs on the mast arms.
- 3) Farnstead Dr.: NWWSD are presently installing meters and fixing the remaining sidewalks. Project will be completed by Thanksgiving.
- 4) Curtice Rd. over I-280 new curb installation and resurfacing: We are finishing plans and will submit to ODOT for approval. Once we receive ODOT approval we will bid the project.
- 5) Arbor Dr.: The project has been completed.
- 6) Dry Creek Aquatic and Riparian Restoration project: This project is located on Waste Management property and being 100% funded by a US EPA grant. The design-built team has started the design of the improvements. We expect the 30% plans to be completed in mid- November 2024.
- 7) Nature Trails Aquatic and Wetland Restoration project. We had final walk through this week and project will be finish the end of next week.
- 8) We are also getting estimates from the splash pad vendor on in the water recycling system and possible well pump system.
- 9) The Enclave Ditch Enclosure contractor has begun work and weather permitting, should be done by the end of this month.
- 10) The Lemoyne-Woodville intersection traffic signal. This project has been completed except for some minor seeding and mulching. We are inquiring with ODOT to get the traffic signals sequenced along Woodville Road and Curtice Road to prevent all the stop and go along these sections of road.
- 11) We have discussed with ODOT the Williston Rd. (SR 579) and Fostoria Rd. intersection. They are planning to perform a safety study of the intersection which will be completed in the first quarter of next year. The safety study will look at the feasibility of installing a roundabout at the intersection to slow down the traffic going through the intersection.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

1. Josh Petit - 3875 Curtice Rd. Stated he is a current law enforcement officer and has experience working with local dispatch and Lucas County consolidated dispatching services. He shared some issues he has experienced with Lucas County consolidated dispatch, such as address mix-ups, delays in dispatching high priority calls, tied up phone lines, longer response times over radio, and multiple bills for one call for service. Mr. Petit stated he was a former Northwood Police Officer and gave praise to the Northwood Dispatchers. Lastly, Mr. Petit shared his concerns as an officer and citizen on the potential negative effects contracting with the county could have on the city and encouraged the Administration and Council to do their due diligence before making a decision.
2. D.C. Gallaher - 307 Lester Ave. - Stated he was inspired by the Mayor's report of all the positive things happening in the City and believes getting rid of dispatch while trying to hire more full-time firefighters would be one step forward and two steps back. He expressed concerns about eliminating jobs and services we may lose if we switched to the county. Lastly, Mr. Gallaher stated there is no urgency in contracting with the sheriff at this time as the city has been working on creating a joint fire district for years, and suggested keeping dispatch in Northwood and changing services altogether at once when the time comes.
3. Fred Genzman - 6000 Wales - spoke on behalf of the Northwood Police Officers Command Association and as a resident. Mr. Genzman stated he has been employed with the city for 23 years, raised his children in the city and

November 14, 2024

is a current resident. He shared his goal of instilling a "one team, one mission" attitude while working as an officer and the important role our dispatcher play in that mission. Mr. Genzman praised the Finance Director and Council for being fiscally responsible and asked Council to consider using the funds accumulated over the years to keep dispatch in Northwood.

4. Kevin Emmitt - 316 Farnstead - Stated he is a 42 year resident, worked on the fire department, and was a dispatcher for the city. Mr. Emmitt asked if the city considered how the ISO rating would be affected by contracting dispatch to the sheriff? He stated the city's current rating is good with a 4 rating, and part of the ISO score involves the emergency communication system. Mr. Emmitt shared concerns with the city score potentially decreasing, which could raise insurance premiums.

5. Steven Salander - 2435 East Vale, Oregon - Stated he is an Oregon City Council member and wanted to share his experience with the City of Oregon switching to the Lucas County consolidated dispatching system. Mr. Salander shared that many of the same safety concerns were expressed during Oregon's consideration and were dismissed. Now, since being fully consolidated, Oregon is dealing with a lot of those concerns. He shared that about 2 months after Oregon became fully consolidated, a call came in and there was an issue with an address which resulted in a resident being murdered. Lastly, Mr. Salander suggested that if Northwood does contract with the sheriff, consider doing it in stages rather than all at once.

6. Donna Bear - 4909 Curtice Rd. - Stated she is a proud lifelong resident of Northwood and hopes council considers all of the comments made tonight to ensure the right decision is being made for the city.

7. Carol Alright - 2510 Revilla Dr. - Referenced discussion from the 11/7 Finance Committee Meeting. Mrs. Alright asked how the city came up with the amount of \$570,000 for 5 dispatchers. She asked about the police chief's request to keep 2 dispatchers estimated at \$150,000; \$75,000 for each position; and questioned if it was actually costing the city to get rid of 3 employees, since the cost of three dispatchers should be \$225,000 and the sheriff's verbal contract is between \$220,000 - \$230,000. Additionally, she asked what other cities our size are paying for services, length of the contract, and if the cost will rise each year?

8. Kim Ferguson - 1912 Glenross Pl. - Stated she lives at the corner of Glenross(in Northwood) and Glenross(in Lucas County) and her biggest concern is the issues she's already had when calling Lucas County and then not knowing the boundaries in the City. She stated she has never had any issues when calling Northwood directly, and they have always been able to assist. She shared some of the concerns she had noticed when visiting Lucas County 911 Center including high turnover and stated Northwood doesn't have that problem and our dispatchers are reliable.

9. Angellina Schilt - 2417 Norma - gave an example of what a possible situation may look like when people mention wrong addresses or delayed response time as it relates to county dispatch and miscommunication between caller, dispatcher, and computer. She stated that regional, county, and statewide things all have their place, but they are not always the best option. Lastly, she questioned why the dispatch contract was brought up in the finance committee meeting rather than in a safety committee meeting if it was not about the cost savings of the sheriff's contract.

10. Noah Bloom - 2494 Tracy Rd Apartment 7 - Stated when sending police and fire to a call dispatch is essential because every second counts when saving a life and making a difference in the community.

11. Janelle Kretz - 419 Ravenwood - Stated she believes the city should be speaking to the firefighters and police officers we trust every day to answer our emergency calls and ask their advice on what to do with the dispatchers.

12. Julie Krause - Curtice, OH - Stated her father lives in Northwood and many years ago she had to call 911 for an incident involving her father. At the time, she couldn't give the address but the Northwood dispatchers were able to ask questions and determine where she was at and got him the help he needed, which saved his life. She stated that since that incident she has called numerous times and is still talking to the same dispatchers that once helped with the incident with her father, and believes that is important because they are very knowledgeable of the area.

13. Joey Poiry - 334 Harding - Stated that there is a loss of control when outsourcing and you are then subject and victim to whatever happens as a result.

14. Kim Ferguson - Stated she attended a meeting several years ago regarding the roundabout, where people spoke out against it, however the project is still moving forward. She questioned if the public's comments regarding dispatch will matter, or will the city continue moving forward anyway? She expressed concern about large commercial trucks not being able to stop in time for a child. Mayor Schimmel stated the city did listen to the public's concern about the roundabout. He stated there is going to be a crossing beacon for children to cross down by Commerce and working on a plan for additional crossing beacons or at the very least, cross walks as far away from the roundabout as possible to keep from crossing near the roundabout.

15. Collin Arthur - 335 Wolf Creek Ct. - Stated the city can pride themselves in our law enforcement, and they do a great job. He stated it would be a huge mistake to send dispatch regional, and seconds matter in the event of an emergency. Mr. Arthur stated he hopes the elected officials will take the public outcry regarding dispatch into consideration when making a decision.

November 14, 2024

16. Aaron Rising - 2304 Sheffield Pl. - In reference to the fire department, he suggested looking further into the data and budget and what the plan will be for funding once the funds run out. Mr. Rising stated crime rates are 10% over the national average and by removing dispatch and creating longer response times, crime rates will increase. He shared his personal experience of how a quick emergency response saved his life and expressed the importance of response times in those situations. Mr. Rising went on to discuss financial concerns with RITA. He stated he reviewed every financial report from RITA and they appeared to be losing money every year despite claims of them "doing good". He questioned the possibility of bringing the tax department back.

17. Audrey Caligiuri - Asked what happened to all the delinquent taxes the city had prior to RITA taking over and if we ever got back any of the money? Asked about the \$600,000 we are down and stated that it may not have been the best idea to outsource the tax department and the city should focus on getting the delinquent taxes back.

City Administrator Laughlin stated the \$600,000 referenced are not from delinquencies; He stated the shortfall in collections is from accounts being down due to large employers cutting shifts or not employing as many people. Finance Director Yant stated that RITA did send out notices for delinquencies prior to 2023. Mr. Yant stated he requested a report for the 2023 tax year showing delinquencies or how many people did not file but we had to wait until after the federal extension deadline in October. He stated he has not received that report yet but we are working on it and hopefully by December we will be able to send out the reports. Additionally, Mr. Yant stated we have been tracking month by month and the amount we are down this year is partly because of withholding tax, employers not having as many people working; net profit, significantly down due to some of the bigger companies showing losses and not paying as much in taxes. In summary, Mr. Yant stated the shortfalls are not due to RITA, but rather from businesses being down compared to last year.

18. Martha Wiley - 1917 Terri Rue - Worked for Northwood Schools; During ALICE training she was instructed to program Northwood's non-emergency number into her phone and call that number directly before 911, because the response time would be better. She stated during an emergency she didn't call 911, she called Northwood directly, and it is reassuring to be able to get help immediately.

19. Dave Gallaher - 210 Ritter - Stated he hopes the dispatch situation is discussed in committee and the information is exchanged between residents and council so everyone will understand where the city is going. Mr. Gallaher stated the dispatch situation is tough on everybody, but the city has options because of Council and Mayor's ability to build revenue over the years. Lastly, he gave credit to Finance Director Yant for being a key factor in rebounding after the crisis in 2008 and getting the city to the financial position we are in today.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

ATTEST:

Council Clerk

APPROVED:

Mayor