

September 25, 2025

City of Northwood
Regular 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 September 25, 2025 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, Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner City Administrator Kevin Laughlin, and City Engineer Dave Kuhn.

MOTION: Councilor Huntermark made a motion to **excuse City Attorney Brian Ballenger**; seconded by Councilor Melnyk. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 21, 2025 Public Hearing Minutes

MOTION: Councilor Stoner made a motion to **Approve**; seconded by Councilor Huntermark. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

September 11, 2025 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Councilor Huntermark made a motion to **Approve**; seconded by Councilor Edwards. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** Councilor Jim Barton, Council President Randy Kozina
RESULT: *Passed (5-0)*

PRESENTATION

PUBLIC COMMENT

COMMUNICATIONS

20 under 40 Invitation

Invitation was shared with Council. Event will be help on November 3, 2025 at the Valentine Theater.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Economic Development Councilor Jim Barton - Next Meeting October 9 @ 6PM

No Report.

Finance Councilor Louis Fahrbach

No Report.

Recreation Board Councilor Jim Barton

No Report.

Safety Councilor Mark Stoner

No Report.

Tree Commission Councilor Michael Melnyk

The Commission met on Tuesday evening. The white oak trees in front of the Community Center are expected to be moved in November and replaced with Armstrong maples. The Commission will again partner with First Energy this fall, which will provide 150 bare-root trees (50 white pines, and 25 each of basswood, sycamore, swamp white oak, and buckeye) to be planted at the Nature Trails tree farm until they are large enough to be transplanted. Stronger stakes and protective sleeves have been purchased. Planting date will be on October 28 with a start time of 8am - 9am. Possible coordination with CIC Make a Difference Day. The Memorial Tree Program was also discussed. Trees will be offered at a cost of \$300, which includes planting and a memorial plaque. Trees will be placed in one of the three city parks, with locations approved by the Parks & Recreation Director. Information will be available on the city website.

The next Tree Commission meeting is scheduled for November 11 at 5:30 p.m.

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Service	Councilor Dean Edwards
No Report.	
Parks, Rec & NCC	Councilor Pat Huntermark
No Report.	
Committee of the Whole	Council President Kozina
No Report.	
CEREMONIAL ITEMS	
NEW RESOLUTION	
PENDING RESOLUTION	
NEW LEGISLATION	
ORDINANCE 2025-38 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2025-17 PROVIDING FOR THE COMPENSATION OF NON-UNION PERSONNEL OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.	
1st Reading - Kozina	
ORDINANCE 2025-39 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING NCO CHAPTER 204.01 (a) TITLED CITY LOGO.	
1st Reading - Edwards	
There was a question concerning the reasoning for a new city logo. City Administrator Laughlin noted that the redesign originated from branding recommendations related to the Enclave project and subsequent discussions with staff. Questions were raised regarding the departure from the city’s traditional blue and gold colors. Council requested that a version of the proposed logo also be prepared in the traditional colors for comparison. Concern was expressed that the logos presented in the council packet did not adequately represent the city.	
PENDING LEGISLATON	
ORDINANCE 2025-34 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 618.16 OF THE NORTHWOOD CODIFIED ORDINANCES (NCO) TITLED PROXIMITY OF ANIMALS TO RESIDENCES. AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.	
2nd Reading - Melnyk	
ORDINANCE 2025-37 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.	
2nd Reading - Edwards	
ORDINANCE 2025-27 AN ORDINANCE CONCURRING WITH THE NORTHWOOD PLANNING COMMISSIONS RECOMMENDATION TO REZONE 0 WILLISTON ROAD (M50-812-350000031000) FROM R-4, MULTI-FAMILY TO R, SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.	
MOTION: Councilor Stoner made a motion to Move on Emergency Clause; seconded by Councilor Melnyk. ROLL CALL: Yes: Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; No: None; Abstain: None	
MOTION: Councilor Stoner made a motion to Move on Final Adoption; seconded by Councilor Melnyk.ROLL CALL: Yes: Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; No: None; Abstain: None	
RESULT: Passed (7-0) effective immediately	
ORDINANCE 2025-28 AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE NORTHWOOD PLANNING COMMISSION’S RECOMMENDATION TO AMEND CHAPTER 1244.06 OF THE NORTHWOOD CODIFIED ORDINANCES (NCO) TITLED CONDITIONAL USES; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.	
MOTION: Councilor Huntermark made a motion to Move on Emergency Clause; seconded by Councilor Fahrbach. ROLL CALL: Yes: Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; No: None; Abstain: None	
MOTION: Councilor Huntermark made a motion to Move on Final Adoption; seconded by Councilor Fahrbach.ROLL CALL: Yes: Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; No: None; Abstain: None	
RESULT: Passed (7-0) effective immediately	
ORDINANCE 2025-29 AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE NORTHWOOD PLANNING COMMISSION’S RECOMMENDATION TO AMEND CHAPTER 1250.12 OF THE NORTHWOOD CODIFIED ORDINANCES (NCO) TITLED SITE PLAN REVIEW REQUIREMENTS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.	
MOTION: Councilor Melnyk made a motion to Move on Emergency Clause; seconded by Councilor Huntermark. ROLL CALL: Yes: Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor	

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Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

MOTION: Councilor Melnyk made a motion to **Move on Final Adoption**; seconded by Councilor Huntermark.**ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (7-0) effective immediately*

ORDINANCE 2025-33 AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A BUDGET LINE ITEM TO ALLOCATE SAVINGS FROM THE WOOD COUNTY SHERIFF DISPATCH CONTRACT TO FUND THREE FULL-TIME FIREFIGHTER POSITIONS UPON EXPIRATION OF THE SAFER GRANT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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

MOTION: *Councilor Stoner made a motion to ; seconded by Councilor Melnyk.***ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** *Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner;* **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (7-0) effective immediately*

MAYOR Mayor Schimmel

Mayor's Report

ADMINISTRATION:

Budget stabilization "Rainy Day" Policy. Recommendation for Committee of the Whole meeting to furt discuss

The Mayor recommended that the Committee of the Whole discuss the City’s rainy day fund policy or address any immediate questions. The proposal presented was to allocate a dedicated portion of funds strictly to the rainy day fund, to be used only under specific circumstances such as natural disasters, critical infrastructure needs, or budget shortfalls.

Council members expressed support for the proposal, noting that dedicating funds ensures financial stability and maintains at least 50% of operating expenses available if needed. The policy allows for 16–50% of the General Fund to be set aside; discussion focused on establishing the fund at 50%, approximately \$4 million, due to the City’s reliance on income tax revenue and potential economic downturns. The Administrator and Finance Director indicated that this allocation is appropriate given the City’s financial structure.

FIRE:

Chief Whitmore presented the recommendation to hire Brad Pytlarz for the vacant full-time position.

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **hire Brad Pytlarz as a full-time firefighter**; seconded by Councilor Stoner. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

Mayor reported that the Fire Chief applied for and was awarded a FEMA grant to purchase an extractor washing machine for firefighter turnout gear. The equipment had been included in the 2026 budget request, so the previously budgeted amount can be removed. The grant requires a 5% local match, approximately \$1,000. Council was asked to consider a motion to accept the grant award.

MOTION: Councilor Stoner made a motion to **accept the FEMA grant and approve a 5% match**; seconded by Councilor Huntermark.**ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

Mayor reported that Northwood Community Cares and the Fall Festival Committee are experiencing a significant decline in donations compared to previous years, similar to last year. Many major donors have contributed little or nothing, which has resulted in a shortfall for putting on the festival. The request is for the City to consider allocating \$10,000 to support the festival this year. The Mayor noted the request is short notice and a substantial amount, but the committee was hopeful more donations were going to come in, they just didn't materialize.

MOTION: Councilor Huntermark made a motion to **to allocate \$10,000 for the Fall Festival** ; seconded by Councilor Melnyk. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

CITY ADMINISTRATOR Kevin Laughlin

City Administrator's Report

<u>TOPIC/ ITEM</u>	<u>DISCUSSION</u>
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Inclusive Playground	Northwood was contacted by and has been having discussions with Wood County Plays about an inclusive playground to be tentatively located at Brentwood Park. Looking at potentially July 31 for a fundraiser if we do move forward with the project. This opportunity requires a city match of \$250,000–\$300,000, which would leverage over \$900,000 in additional equipment and resources. The project aligns with the previously discussed 2026 capital replacement budget, which included \$200,000 for equipment replacement at Brentwood. The proposed facilities would be over 1,000 square feet and constructed with durable materials. The project is still in the initial stages, and more information is to come. Council asked if this was similar to the grant Walbridge received to redo their playground; City Administrator advised it is not, other grant opportunities such as LWCF will be pursued for this project.
Codification	Switching Codification services from American Legal to CivicPlus Municode Benefits: • Identifies inconsistencies or conflicts within legislation. Especially valuable for complex sections like the zoning code. • Predictable annual billing, not dependent on number of pages edited. • Flexible supplementation schedule with quick turnaround (print 40–45 days, electronic 15 days, online 3 days). • Ordinances posted and hyperlinked online between supplements, ensuring public transparency. • access up-to-date codes and past versions online. <u>Project Timeline & Cost:</u> 18-month project; starting ASAP ensures timely completion. CivicPlus will host a PDF version of our code during the transition, with clear disclaimers noting current legislation dates. Total project cost: \$25,050, billed over three years (not upfront): 2025 – \$6,262.50 (contract execution) 2026 – \$12,525 (legal memorandum + proofs if applicable) 2027 – \$6,262.50 (completion) \$7,310 remains in the 2025 budget. Requesting authorization to sign the proposal, with the understanding that the \$13,000 capital budget line item will need approval when due. MOTION: Councilor Stoner made a motion to authorize the City Administrator to sign the proposal for the codification switch to Municode by Civic Plus; seconded by Councilor Edwards. ROLL CALL: Yes: Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; No: None; Abstain: None RESULT: <i>Passed (7-0)</i>
November December Council Schedule	& Moving the November 27th meeting to November 6th ; Moving the December 25th meeting to December 4th. MOTION: Councilor Huntermark made a motion to schedule the November Council meetings for the 6th and 13th and Deceber Meetings for the 4th and 11th; seconded by Councilor Stoner.ROLL CALL: Yes: None; No: None; Abstain: None RESULT: <i>Passed (7-0)</i>

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Clock Tower at the Enclave

At the direction of Mayor Schimmel, the administration has been working with EMH&T on further city-sponsored development at the Enclave. Specifically, designs and estimates to develop the boulevard island on Park Avenue.

Renderings showed multiple design options for the clock tower and associated landscaping.

Council discussed the options, considering factors such as aesthetics, maintenance requirements for the Service Department, and cost estimates. The all-masonry tower (Option 1) was noted as the most favored design and also the least expensive at approximately \$322,000 with a 20% contingency. Other options ranged from \$325,000 to \$405,000. Site work and landscaping costs varied, with Option 4—the most pared-down design—estimated at \$123,000, making it the preferred choice due to lower maintenance requirements. The proposed tower would be approximately 50 feet tall, visible over surrounding buildings, and within the three-story limit of the overlay district.

Council members emphasized the importance of balancing visual impact with practical considerations such as maintenance and usable public space. No final decision was made; options will continue to be reviewed and refined for inclusion in the next year’s budget and capital improvement planning.

Councilor Stoner requested the Service Department to get quotes for next year's budget for heavy duty rubber mats to be placed at the bottom of the playground slides to provide a soft landing for children.

CITY FINANCIAL REPORT(S)

LIST OF EXPENDITURES OVER \$10,000

INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
AETNA	EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE 10/1/25-10/31/25	\$73,899.54

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **Approve the list of Expenditures over \$10,000**; seconded by Councilor Stoner. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT/DISCUSSION Brian Ballenger

CITY ENGINEER’S REPORT/DISCUSSION Dave Kuhn

City Engineer's Report			
Project Name	Project Budget	Current Status	Key Changes Since Last Meeting
The Enclave	N/A	Construction	Working on closing out project. Wallick is waiting on Wood County Building Inspection to approve the foundation permit. Ground Breaking Ceremony is scheduled for October 16th at 11am. Invitation will be shared.
Curtice Rd. Resurfacing & Curbs over I-280	\$195,600.00	Design	Finalizing plans & submit to ODOT for approval in September. Bid after approval.
Dry Creek Aquatic and Riparian Restoration Project	\$500,000.00	In Design	Waiting for 100% design plans from DRG to review. Construction to be later in fall of 2025.
NNC	N/A	Warranty Work	Contractor has completed replacing the concrete on sidewalk areas.
ODOT	N/A	Misc. Item	ODOT is working on the timing signal for Curtice Rd.
ODOT	N/A	Misc. Item	ODOT performed a traffic safety study at Fostoria Rd and Williston Rd. (SR 579) and recommended a roundabout to be 100% funded by ODOT and grants. ODOT performed a traffic safety study at Bradner Rd and Williston Rd. (SR 579) and made several

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			recommendations, including making the intersectio 4-way stop and eliminating the left-turn lane.
Wolf Creek Court Drainage Improvements	\$261,775.00	Construction	Contractor has begun the construction improvemer Letters have been sent out for sidewalk assessment
West Andrus Road Pavement Improvements	\$405,060.12	Construction	Contractor indicated that work will begin soon. Lett have been sent out for sidewalk assessments.
Dalling Drive Extension	\$457,300.00	Design	In the process of designing the improvements. Bid
	Construction Est.		project the first half of Oct. 2025
Northwood 2025 Pavement Resurfacing Improvements	\$ 721,775.00	Construction	Contractor began work on Chantilly Rue this week ahead of the original schedule.

NEW BUSINESS

Council discussed potential improvements to blue light beacons at railroad crossings. The City has been in initial discussions with TrainFio, a Canadian company specializing in advanced warning systems for railways. The proposed system would provide integrated alerts through Waze, Google Maps, and text messaging, initially for first responders and eventually for the public.

The pilot location would be Wales Road, with the possibility of expanding county-wide to include Lemoyne Road, Millbury, Walbridge, and other areas. Benefits include improved visibility of warning signals, data collection to support future grant applications, and enhanced safety at problem crossings. The system is cell phone- and sensor-based, reducing manual operation issues experienced with the current blue light system. No cost estimates are available at this time, as discussions are still in early stages.

Mayor Schimmel recommended extending Halloween trick-or-treat times from 6-8pm. There was no opposition to the request.

Councilor Melnyk noted that Northwood Community Cares does a good job organizing festivals, particularly the Fall Festival, and suggested that the City consider providing consistent funding in the future rather than relying on external donations.

OLD BUSINESS

none.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NA

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Council President Kozina made a motion to **enter into executive session with Mayor, Council and City Administrator to discuss employment of a public employee;** seconded by Councilor Huntermark. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (7-0) 7:52pm*

The meeting was called back to order at 8:09pm and the roll was called by Council Clerk Popovitch. Those in attendance were as follows: Mayor Schimmel, Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Barton, Council President Kozina, Councilor Stoner City Administrator Kevin Laughlin, and City Attorney Dave Kuhn.

No Acton Taken.

ADJOURNMENT

08:09 PM

ATTEST: _____
Council Clerk

APPROVED: _____
Mayor