

November 13, 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 07:03 PM on November 13, 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, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey City Administrator Kevin Laughlin, and City Engineer Dave Kuhn.

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

RESULT: Passed (5-1)

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **excuse City Attorney Brian Ballenger**; seconded by Councilor Stoner. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: Passed (6-0)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 6, 2025 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

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

RESULT: Passed (6-0)

PRESENTATION

Health Insurance Renewal Discussion – Presentation by Brian King, King Insurance Agency

Brian King presented renewal information for the City's employee health insurance. The initial renewal proposal from Aetna was a 9.7% increase, later reduced to 7% as of this evening. Aetna is also offering a potential surplus refund of approximately \$3,798.68 (50% would return to the City if renewed), though this is preliminary and only reflects claims through September. Additionally, Aetna is offering a \$16,400 credit on the City's February 2026 invoice if the City renews.

Anthem has submitted a competing quote with comparable plans priced at approximately 5.5% below current rates. A slightly enhanced Anthem plan is about 1.7% below current, but the comparable plan remains a very favorable option. Medical Mutual has not yet submitted a quote; United Healthcare and Paramount declined to quote. Mr. King expects an answer from Medical Mutual shortly and has requested expedited review due to the upcoming open enrollment period.

Mr. King noted that Anthem contracts with approximately 99.9% of providers, minimizing disruption to employee physician networks. Prescription coverage under Anthem would include copays of \$10 generic, \$40 preferred brand, \$70 non-preferred brand, and 25% for specialty medications. Some differences in drug cards and copays may occur compared to the current plan.

Council discussed the timeline for open enrollment and concerns regarding employees whose spouses' open enrollment windows are already closing. Open enrollment could begin as soon as a carrier is selected; however, delaying the decision until the December 4 meeting may restrict employee flexibility.

Cost comparisons were reviewed:

Aetna revised renewal: approx. \$861,862

Anthem proposed cost: approx. \$775,841

The current budget reflects approximately \$844,000 allocated for health insurance. Council discussed Medical Mutual's ongoing negotiations with ProMedica and potential long-term cost impacts if the City were to return to that carrier.

After further discussion, Council considered authorizing the City Administrator to finalize selection without calling a special meeting, provided the chosen plan is the lowest and best and does not exceed \$800,000 annually.

MOTION: Councilor Fahrbach made a motion to **authorize the City Administrator to proceed with the lowest and best health insurance provider not to exceed \$800,000**; seconded by Councilor Stoner. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: Passed (6-0)

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Finance Director Yant raised a question about whether the City will continue offering the \$2,000 HSA contribution and whether employee contribution percentages will remain the same as the current year. Administration confirmed there had been no request to change these items at this time.

Council members discussed the balance between employee and taxpayer cost share. Historical data previously provided to Council shows employees currently contribute just over 6%, though union contracts cap employee contributions at 15%. Some members expressed interest in gradually adjusting the employee share over time. One proposal suggested increasing the employee percentage by 1% per year to slowly realign the distribution of costs while avoiding sharp increases for employees. Concerns were raised about the impact of increased employee healthcare contributions without corresponding wage increases, especially given the varied timing of union contract renewals. Administration provided clarification on the current contract schedule (OPBA patrol entering final year; OPBA supervisors, AFSCME, and FOP on staggered cycles) and noted that coordinating wage schedules with insurance renewal cycles is difficult.

Further discussion clarified the practical financial impact of a 1% shift in employee healthcare contribution, approximately \$8,000 total, or about \$200 annually per employee, relative to annual wage increases. Council agreed that employees need timely information about contribution rates for open enrollment. No final decision was made regarding changes to employee contribution percentages, and Council may revisit the issue at a future meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor announced the Wood County Economic Development Holiday Reception, scheduled for December 2, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn at Levis Commons. Information will be distributed to Council.

The Mayor also reported receiving a contribution request from Wreaths Across America, coordinated locally by the Walbridge VFW for the Lake Township Cemetery. Previous contributions were noted. Contribution levels include:

Family: \$68

Small Business (10 wreaths): \$170

Corporate: \$1,700

The Mayor requested Council consider making a Small Business-level contribution of \$170 for 10 wreaths.

MOTION: Council President Barton made a motion to **approve a Small Business donation to Wreaths Across America for \$170** ; seconded by Councilor Stoner. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Economic Development Council President Jim Barton - Meeting 11/13 @ 6PM

Glenn Grisdale presented a progress report at the meeting covering key items:

1. Northwood Comprehensive Community Plan – Ongoing review and discussion of implementation priorities.
2. EB Site Projects – Two developments are progressing:
 - o An Australian-based pool company planning facilities on two parcels.
 - o Speedway proposing a new development at the corner of Chelsea and Wales Road.
3. The Enclave Project – Updates provided on the Wallick facility and the bid process to extend Dalling Drive.
4. State Capital Budget Requests – Discussion included funding pursuits for a new playground and a potential hockey facility.
5. Business Retention & Expansion – Brief update on local business outreach efforts.
6. Ohio EPA Better Building Program – Information shared regarding grant opportunities.
7. Great Eastern – Reported that attorney Brian Ballenger will be filing a summary judgment in Wood County Court within the coming weeks.

A full written report was submitted and will be attached to the meeting minutes.

Finance Councilor Louis Fahrbach

No Report.

Recreation Board Councilor Jim Barton

Updates from the recent meeting:

2026 Events: All events have been scheduled:

Palooza in the Park: June 5

Kids Fishing Derby: June 20

Beats and Eats: August 7 at the Northwood Community Center

Soccer Program:

A new 14U soccer field will be added for children ages 8–10; goals have been secured.

Priority for participation: Northwood school students first, open enrollment second, and Rossford/Oregon children if space allows.

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Baseball & Softball:

Registration will begin after January 1.

Director and assistant director to review current inventory of pants at Brentwood before the Rec Board makes a decision.

Plans are being considered for a new T-Ball diamond, potentially included in the 2027 budget.

Soccer Birthdates & Scheduling:

New ESSL birthdate rules will be implemented; Northwood plans to start the program in spring to align with the updated schedule.

Inclusive Playground:

Located at Brentwood Park; a fundraiser is scheduled for January 31 at the Northwood Community Center.

Community Service Award:

The Board plans to begin the award process early in the year to encourage broader participation.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for December 10 at 6:00 p.m., if necessary.

Safety Councilor Mark Stoner

No Report.

Tree Commission Councilor Michael Melnyk

The Tree Commission met on Tuesday, November 11. Key topics discussed included:

Tree Transplanting:

The white oaks in front of the Northwood Community Center are scheduled to be transplanted within the next week. Only two trees will be transplanted to ensure uniform appearance and better landscaping near the building.

Planning & Volunteer Engagement:

Commission members were asked to consider strategies to generate more interest and expand the volunteer base for 2026.

Microforest Project:

The Commission discussed a proposal on microforests previously presented by Councilor Stoner.

Rob Canaday will conduct further research, with plans to potentially implement the project next year.

Awards & Designations:

The Commission is working on applications for the Growth Award and Tree City USA designation, due the first Friday in December.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for January 13, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

Service Councilor Dean Edwards

No Report. Next Meeting scheduled for December 4th @ 6:45PM

Parks, Rec & NCC Councilor Pat Huntermark

No Report.

Committee of the Whole Council President Barton - Meeting 11/13 @ 6:30PM

The Committee met and discussed the following items:

2026 Payroll – Preliminary discussion of payroll planning for the upcoming year.

Staffing Requests – Consideration of potential additional positions for Police, Street, and Economic Development departments.

Clock Tower Project – Updates and discussion regarding the clock tower initiative.

CEREMONIAL ITEMS

NEW RESOLUTION

PENDING RESOLUTION

NEW LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE 2025-47 AN ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD, OHIO DURING THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2026, AND ESTABLISHING ACCOUNTS THEREON; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

1st Reading - Edwards

ORDINANCE 2025-48 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE TERMS OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD, OHIO AND THE FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE (SERGEANTS); AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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

MOTION: Councilor Stoner made a motion to **Move on Emergency Clause**; seconded by Councilor Melnyk. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **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, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (6-0) Effective Immediately*

ORDINANCE 2025-49 AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE FIREFIGHTER STAFFING SUSTAINABILITY FUND, AUTHORIZING INCREASING ESTIMATED RESOURCES, APPROPRIATIONS AND TRANSFER OF FUNDS OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

1st Reading - Melnyk

ORDINANCE 2025-50 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

1st Reading - Edwards

ORDINANCE 2025-51 AN ORDINANCE INCREASING ESTIMATED RESOURCES, SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS AND THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS FOR THE BUDGET STABILIZATION FUND #111; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

1st Reading - Melnyk

PENDING LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE 2025-45 AUTHORIZING AN INCREASE IN ESTIMATED RESOURCES AND THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

2nd Reading - Edwards

ORDINANCE 2025-46 AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

2nd Reading - Edwards

ORDINANCE 2025-44 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE UPDATED POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR THE ZONING INSPECTOR, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **Move on Final Adoption**; seconded by Councilor Stoner. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

ORDINANCE 2025-43 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE UPDATED POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, ZONING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

MOTION: Councilor Melnyk made a motion to **Move on Final Adoption**; seconded by Council President Barton. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

MAYOR Mayor Schimmel

Mayor's Report

Recommendation to appoint Joshua Auman as a member of the Planning Commission. He will be taking the place of Dave Kuhn after Dave's retirement from Feller Finch & Associates and he will be in attendance at the Planning Commission and City Council meetings.

MOTION: Councilor Fahrbach made a motion to **to authorize the City Administrator to proceed with the lowest and best health insurance provider not to exceed \$800,000**; seconded by Councilor Stoner. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

Blood Drive:

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Scheduled at the Northwood Community Center on November 26, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Participants are encouraged to sign up online; paper sign-ups may also be available.

Fall Leaf Pickup:
Ongoing from November 3 to December 12.

Spaghetti Fundraiser:
Scheduled at Tracy Road Fire Station on November 16, 12:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. Benefiting the family of retired firefighter Karen Culler; suggested donation is \$10.

Committee Recognition / Member Incentives:
Discussion on providing pullovers, jackets, or other items to members of various boards/commissions (Planning Commission, BZA) to encourage participation.
Alternative suggestion: host a Walleye game outing for committee members, estimated cost \$43–\$47 per person, proposed for February 27.
Council agreed the idea should be reviewed by a committee (possibly Service Committee) with a recommendation.
Hard numbers and options will be provided for discussion at the December 4 meeting.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR Kevin Laughlin

City Administrator's Report

TOPIC/ ITEM DISCUSSION

Headshots Tentatively scheduled for January 5th prior to Org & Regular Council Meeting.

Holiday office December 26th and January 2nd.
closure

Tree Lighting December 3rd at 6PM at the NCC
Ceremony

CITY FINANCIAL REPORT(S)

MOTION: Councilor Stoner made a motion to **acknowledge receipt of the October Financial Reports**; seconded by Councilor Edwards. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: Passed (6-0)

October bank reconciliation

October financial reports

LIST OF EXPENDITURES OVER \$10,000

<u>INVOICE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
GERKEN PAVING INC	2025 PAVEMENT RESURFACING	\$219,430.72
FELLER FINCH	DALLING DRIVE EXTENSION-WALICK PROPERTY	\$15,320.59
BIO-CARE	FIRE DEPT. MEDICAL PHYSICALS	\$12,015.00
THOMAS DESIMPELAERE	RELEASE OF INSURANCE ESCROW FUND FOR FIRE REPAIRS	\$23,538.53

MOTION: Councilor Melnyk made a motion to **Approve the list of expenditures over \$10,000**; seconded by Councilor Edwards. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: Passed (6-0)

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT/DISCUSSION Brian Ballenger

CITY ENGINEER'S REPORT/DISCUSSION Dave Kuhn

City Engineer's Report

<u>Project Name</u>	<u>Project Budget</u>	<u>Current Status</u>	<u>Key Changes Since Last Meeting</u>
Curtice Rd. Resurfacing & Curbs over I-280	\$195,600.00	Design	Finalizing plans & submitting to ODOT for approval. Bid after approval.

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Dry Creek Aquatic and Riparian Restoration Project	\$500,000.00	In Design	Construction on hold until we get Wood County approval.
Wolf Creek Court Drainage Improvements	\$261,775.00	Construction	All work was completed except for some miscellaneous cleanup and items to be addressed. We begin to calculate field quantity sidewalk assessments.
West Andrus Road Pavement Improvements	\$405,060.12	Construction	All work was completed except for some miscellaneous cleanup and items to be addressed. We begin to calculate field quantity sidewalk assessments.
Dalling Drive Extension	\$457,300.00	Design	Bid opening is on Nov. 12, with recommendations coming to Council on Dec. 4.
Northwood 2025 Pavement Resurfacing Improvements	\$ 721,775.00	Construction	The contractor has finished work on Anderson St. at Mary St. Chantilly Rue pavement and sidewalk work finished. Some minor items and cleanup need to be completed. The contractor has begun installing sidewalks along Oregon Rd. Next, we will be calculating field quantities for Chantilly Rue sidewalk assessments.

NEW BUSINESS

Council requested a sketch of the Wales Road Corridor project to review. Administration will follow up and share with council.

OLD BUSINESS

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Councilor Fahrbach made a motion to **enter into executive session with Mayor, Council, and City Administrator to discuss the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official;** seconded by Councilor Melnyk. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Fahrbach, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Melnyk, Council President Barton, Councilor Stoner, Councilor Dickey; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: *Passed (6-0) 7:56PM*

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

No Action Taken.

ADJOURNMENT

08:13 PM

ATTEST:

Council Clerk

APPROVED:

Mayor