

January 22, 2026

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 January 22, 2026 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 Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk City Administrator Kevin Laughlin, City Attorney Brian Ballenger and City Engineer Josh Auman.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 5, 2026 Organizational Council Meeting Minutes

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

January 5, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

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

PRESENTATION

Trainfo Presentation

Administration provided an update on ongoing efforts related to rail crossing issues at Wales Road. While the City continues to pursue grant funding for a third overpass as a long-term solution, staff has also been exploring short- to mid-term options to address delays caused by stopped and shunting trains. Administration reported that discussions over the past several months led to engagement with TrainFo, a rail crossing information system provider specializing in real-time monitoring and warning systems for problem crossings. A representative from TrainFo provided an overview of a proposed advanced warning system that would utilize sensors and flashing beacons to alert motorists when crossings are active and to assist in routing traffic toward the East Broadway grade separation. The system would monitor train activity in real time, distinguish between moving and stopped trains, and provide data through roadside beacons as well as navigation platforms such as Google Maps and Waze. The system would also collect historical data regarding train stoppages, traffic delays, and safety-related incidents. It was noted that similar deployments have resulted in an estimated 30–35% reduction in vehicle delays, depending on motorist compliance. The collected data would also support future grant applications and benefit-cost analyses related to potential grade separation projects. Council discussed beacon placement, public visibility of alerts, anticipated delay reductions, and the cost structure, which includes an initial capital expense and an ongoing annual service fee, as outlined in the Council packet. No formal action was taken. The matter will remain under consideration, with potential future discussion by Council or Service committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

COMMUNICATIONS

Friends of WIC Award - NCC

Mayor Schimmel announced that the Northwood Community Center received the Fall 2025 Friends of WIC Award for Excellent Performance, presented by Wood County WIC. The nomination was submitted by Katie Dennison of Wood County WIC. The award recognizes the Community Center for serving as an outstanding host for the WIC satellite clinic. The Mayor noted that the Center incorporated a dedicated WIC space into its building plans and has provided the space at no cost. Since relocating to the Community Center in June 2024, WIC participation increased from 116 participants in May 2024 to 151 participants in July 2025. The Mayor highlighted the staff's continued flexibility, accessibility, and support of WIC programming, as well as the Center's inclusion of WIC families in holiday giving initiatives. The partnership was credited with improving access to healthy food, breastfeeding support, education, and other essential community resources. The Mayor expressed appreciation to Council and staff for their role in ensuring WIC had a suitable and welcoming facility.

Councilor Dickey inquired whether Council had reviewed an email regarding evaluation of the City's parking requirements. It was confirmed that the email had been received and reviewed. Council discussed that the

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matter could be referred to the Planning Commission for further review. It was noted that the existing parking ordinance is lengthy and that similar ordinances in other jurisdictions are not highly specific. Council indicated that additional clarification from the sender regarding specific language or changes being requested would be helpful before moving forward. Members noted that the Planning Commission has historically exercised flexibility in waiving parking requirements based on facility size, number of employees, or operational needs. While no immediate action was taken, Council expressed openness to reviewing parking standards as part of broader zoning code updates. It was suggested that evaluation of parking requirements be added to the list of items for consideration during upcoming zoning code revisions.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Mayor reviewed Council committee and board assignments for the upcoming term. The following appointments were announced:

- Tree Commission: Councilor Melnyk (continuing)
- Recreation Board: Jim Barton (continuing)
- Parks, Recreation, and Northwood Community Center: Pat Huntermark, Pat McGaharan, Jim Barton
- Economic Development Committee: Jim Barton, Terry Kretz, Pat Huntermark
- Finance Committee: Dean Edwards, Andrew Dickey, Terry Kretz
- Safety Committee: Pat Huntermark, Andrew Dickey, Terry Kretz
- Service Committee: Dean Edwards, Pat McGaharan, Jim Barton
- CIC Liaison: Pat McGaharan
- Firefighters' Dependent Board: Andrew Dickey, Dean Edwards

The Mayor indicated that the committee assignments would be distributed to Council via email.

Economic Development

Next meeting: 2/12 @ 6PM

Finance

Next meeting: 2/26 @ 6PM

Recreation Board

1/14 Meeting canceled. Next meeting: 2/11 @ 6PM @ NCC

Safety

Next meeting: 2/12 @ 6:45PM

Tree Commission

Tree Commission met on the 13th. Minutes from the meeting were provided to Council. The Commission discussed the proposed microforest project and determined it to be feasible. A presentation was given by Rob Canaday outlining the benefits of the project. Three potential sites were identified for consideration, pending confirmation that no conflicting City plans exist for those locations.

The Commission also discussed strategies to increase volunteer participation for City projects and ways to improve outreach for the Memorial Tree Program. Information regarding the program will be posted on the communications board at the Northwood Community Center and may also be displayed periodically on the City's electronic sign. Residents may obtain information by emailing the Tree Commission or calling City offices.

Additional updates included:

Three Bradford pear trees were removed on Wolf Creek Court and are planned for replacement in the spring.

Four oak trees at the Northwood Community Center were transplanted to Brentwood Park, with placements near the basketball and pickleball courts.

Two Armstrong maple trees were replaced in front of the Northwood Community Center.

Service

No Report.

Parks, Rec & NCC

No Report.

Committee of the Whole

Next meeting: 2/26 @ 6:30PM

MAYOR Mayor Schimmel

Mayor's Report

Recommendation to appoint Matt Johanns to the Board of Zoning Appeals **MOTION:** Councilor Edwards made a motion to **appoint Matt Johanns to the Board of Zoning Appeals**; seconded by Councilor Barton. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: Passed (7-0)

FIRE:

Chief Whitmore recommended hiring

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- Ronald Vendt for the position of recruit firefighter

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **appoint Ronald Vendt as a recruit firefighter** ; seconded by Councilor Kretz.**ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: Passed (7-0)

- Michael Roberts for a part-time firefighter/EMT position

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **appoint Michael Roberts as a Part-time Firefighter/EMT** seconded by Councilor Dickey. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: Passed (7-0)

Chief Whitmore presented the following resignations from the part-time ranks.

- Joseph Walker - Effective January 7th
- Kamden Ohrt - Effective January 15th
- Ryan Grant - Effective January 31st

Council was reminded that Wood County Plays is hosting its annual fundraiser on Saturday, January 31, at the Northwood Community Center. It was noted that three tables remained available at the time of the announcement, and Council members were encouraged to share the information with anyone interested in supporting the Wood County Plays project planned for Brentwood Park.

Council confirmed that the City has already purchased a table for the event and that the cost has been paid. It was further noted that available seats at the City's table were subsequently filled.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR Kevin Laughlin

CITY FINANCIAL REPORT(S)

MOTION: Councilor Barton made a motion to **acknowledge receipt of the December financial reports**; seconded by Councilor Edwards. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None
RESULT: Passed (7-0)

December 2025 Expenditures

Dec 31 2025 Year End financials

Dec 31 2025 bank reconciliation

City Administrator's Report

Enclave RFI and Comprehensive Plan Update:

Administration reviewed progress on the Enclave redevelopment Request for Information (RFI) and the Comprehensive Plan update. It was reported that the City reassessed its approach to marketing and development following limited success with previous commercial realtors. An RFI focused on residential "brownstone" style townhomes on the south side of Main Street is scheduled for discussion at the February 12 committee meeting, with interest expressed by several regional residential developers. A separate RFI for commercial development on the north side of Main Street is in development and expected to be presented on February 12.

Administration also reported that a final draft of the Comprehensive Plan is complete and will be presented to the Economic Development Committee on February 12, with a recommendation for Council adoption anticipated that evening.

Walbridge Police Services Discussion:

Administration reported ongoing discussions with the Village of Walbridge regarding Northwood providing overnight police coverage due to Walbridge staffing challenges. The proposed arrangement would include limited patrol coverage and emergency response between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., with an estimated cost of approximately \$3,000. The matter will be discussed further by the Safety Committee on February 12.

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Police Cruiser Purchase:

Quotes for the purchase of a new police cruiser were prepared by the Police Chief. The vehicle and equipment were previously included in the approved 2026 budget and will be discussed at the February 12 meeting.

State Route 579 Safety Projects:

Administration reported that ODOT received systemic safety funding for a roundabout at State Route 579 and Bradner Road. A second roundabout at Fostoria Road and State Route 579 is also planned. Both projects are anticipated for construction in summer 2029, with the Fostoria Road roundabout currently in preliminary engineering.

Magistrate Contract:

Council authorized the execution of a contract for City Magistrate Drew [last name], noting the absence of a prior formal contract and the need to adjust compensation to remain competitive.

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **authorize signing the Magistrate contract**; seconded by Council President Melnyk. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

HVAC Maintenance Contract:

Administration reviewed the solicitation of bids for HVAC maintenance services at the Northwood Community Center and City Building. Five proposals were received, with SSH Mechanical Services identified as the lowest and most qualified bidder, including experience with the Community Center's HVAC software system. A representative from SSH Mechanical Services addressed Council, thanking the City for the opportunity to submit a proposal. The representative stated that the company reviewed the City's HVAC equipment and found it to be generally in good condition. SSH Mechanical noted that while the company is relatively new, its partners have extensive industry experience, including prior work with a larger mechanical firm. The company confirmed local service coverage and the ability to provide 24/7 emergency response, with response times typically within one hour and no more than four hours in emergency situations.

A representative from Campbell Mechanical (Cable Mechanical) also addressed Council, acknowledging recent service issues and delays in response. The representative stated that corrective actions have been taken and requested that Council consider tabling the decision to allow for further discussion. He emphasized the company's long-standing relationship with the City and its local presence in Northwood.

Tom Huntermark, Director of Public Service, provided additional context, stating that service issues with Campbell Mechanical have extended beyond recent months and have persisted for approximately two years. He cited concerns regarding response times, follow-through, and familiarity with the HVAC control software at the Northwood Community Center. Director Huntermark stated that the Community Center's HVAC system requires specialized knowledge and indicated that SSH Mechanical demonstrated the necessary expertise. He noted that while some issues have recently been addressed, outstanding concerns remain. Based on these factors, Director Huntermark recommended proceeding with SSH Mechanical Services

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **authorize the City Administrator to sign the HVAC and maintenance contract with SSH Mechanical Services**; seconded by Councilor Huntermark. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

Woodville Road Pedestrian Improvement Project:

Administration requested authorization to advertise for bids for the Woodville Road Pedestrian Improvement Project. The project includes sidewalk improvements along the Woodville Road corridor and the installation of a pedestrian beacon to improve safety.

MOTION: Council President Melnyk made a motion to **Advertise for bids for the Woodville Rd. Pedestrian Improvement Project**; seconded by Councilor Huntermark. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

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IT Services – DEX Incorporated:

The City received a proposed contract and final quote from DEX Incorporated to provide IT services, at a significantly lower monthly cost (\$4,700) than the prior provider, VC3 (\$12,000–\$13,000). DEX has been working with City staff for several months and can provide local, 24/7 support with timely on-site response. The contract is pending final review and approval by the City Attorney.

MOTION: Councilor Huntermark made a motion to **authorize signing the contract with DEX Imaging for IT services pending the final approval by the City Attorney**; seconded by Councilor Kretz. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

Planning Office Temporary Support:

Due to recent turnover in the Planning Office, retired professional Dave Kuhn has been engaged to assist on a short-term basis, working one to two days per week to manage ongoing tasks and support Planning Commission operations. Additionally, a planning intern, Leland, is assisting a few days per week. These measures are intended as temporary solutions while the City continues to recruit for permanent positions, including a zoning inspector and economic development coordinator.

Potential Staff Audit:

Administration discussed the need for a staff audit to evaluate department workloads, staffing levels, and alignment with strategic goals, particularly given recent resignations and staffing shortages. Council expressed interest in obtaining a proposal and cost estimate from a neutral auditing firm while considering input from department heads to ensure the audit aligns with the City's long-term operational goals.

LIST OF EXPENDITURES OVER \$10,000

<u>INVOICE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
RUDOLPH LIBBE INC	COMPLETE REWORK TO EXISTING WINDOW OPENINGS- FIRE DEPT. RENOVATIONS	\$13,172.00
CIVICA	LICENSE, SUPPORT & MAINTENANCE FINANCE & PAYROLL SOFTWARE 2026	\$11,031.57
VC3	DECEMBER 2025 MONTHLY BILLING	\$11,936.01
MORTON SALT	BULK SAFE-T-SALT	\$21,108.53
DAVEY RESOURCE GROUP	WM DRY CREEK RESTORATION	\$180,102.90

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **approve the list of expenditures over \$10,000**; seconded by Councilor Dickey. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (7-0)*

NEW RESOLUTION

PENDING RESOLUTION

NEW LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE 2026-06 ESTABLISHING CHAPTER 477 TITLED LOW SPEED VEHICLES, TO TITLE TEN OF THE NORTHWOOD CODIFIED ORDINANCES; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

1st Reading - Barton

ORDINANCE 2026-07 REALLOCATING THE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS RECEIVING INTEREST INCOME AND THE DISTRIBUTION THEREOF BY THE FINANCE AND REVENUE DIRECTOR.

1st Reading - Barton

ORDINANCE 2026-08 AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

1st Reading - Edwards

PENDING LEGISLATION

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ORDINANCE 2026-02 PROVIDING FOR THE COMPENSATION OF NON-UNION MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

2nd Reading - Edwards

ORDINANCE 2026-03 PROVIDING FOR THE COMPENSATION OF FULL TIME, NON-UNION, NON-MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

2nd Reading - Edwards

ORDINANCE 2026-04 PROVIDING FOR THE COMPENSATION OF PART TIME, NON-UNION, NON-MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL OF THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

2nd Reading - Edwards

ORDINANCE 2026-05 APPROVING THE JOB DESCRIPTION FOR RECREATION SHIFT LEAD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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

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

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **Move on Final Adoption**; seconded by Councilor Huntermark. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Barton, Councilor Dickey, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** Dean Edwards

RESULT: *Passed (6-0) Effective Immediately*

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT/DISCUSSION **Brian Ballenger**

No Report.

CITY ENGINEER'S REPORT/DISCUSSION **Dave Kuhn**

City Engineer's Report

Curtice Road Resurfacing / I-280 Curb Work:

Construction is nearly complete. The project is expected to be submitted to ODOT shortly for review and approval and is nearing final completion.

Dry Creek Aquatic and Riparian Restoration Project:

A project walkthrough was conducted last week. Construction is substantially complete as permitted by weather conditions. Final plantings will be completed in the spring when conditions allow.

Dalling Drive Extension Improvements:

A pre-construction meeting was held earlier today. Contract documents are currently at City Hall awaiting final signatures. Construction is anticipated to begin in early March, weather permitting. The contractor will continue to provide schedule updates through the winter.

West Andrus Project:

Construction is complete. The City is awaiting the contractor's invoice and is currently working on sidewalk assessments.

2025 Pavement Resurfacing Improvements:

Construction is complete, including work along Oregon Road. The City is awaiting the contractor's invoice and is working on associated sidewalk assessments.

Northwood 2026 Pavement Resurfacing Improvements (New Project):

Planned roadways include Richmond Drive, Dilrose Drive, and East Dalling Drive (from East Plaza to the dead end). These projects are currently on the surveyor's schedule so design work can begin. Surveying and design will proceed as weather conditions allow.

Railroad Crossing / Train-Related Project:

This item has been tabled to the Service Committee. If the project proceeds, Council authorization will be needed to advertise for bids.

Additional Clarification:

The Dilrose Drive improvements will cover the full length from Richmond Drive to Oregon Road. Portions currently without curbing will receive curbs. These improvements will complete the remaining Heritage Park roadway projects.

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NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Dickey suggested exploring ways to expand and better promote the City's recreational sports programs. It was noted that sign-ups for baseball, softball, and soccer are currently open, but some parents may be unaware due to limited communication. A recommendation was made to consider coordinating sign-ups during an upcoming baseball clinic and to improve outreach through the schools, particularly to encourage participation in youth soccer. Administrator indicated this could be looked into and should not be a problem.

OLD BUSINESS

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

08:20 PM

ATTEST:

Council Clerk

APPROVED:

Mayor