

March 26, 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 07:02 PM on March 26, 2026 in the Council Chambers and via Live Stream.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mayor Schimmel

Pledge of Allegiance was given.

ROLL CALL

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **excuse Councilor Barton**; seconded by Council President Melnyk.

ROLL CALL: **Yes:** Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 12, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Councilor Huntermark made a motion to **Approve**; seconded by Councilor Edwards. **ROLL**

CALL: **Yes:** Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

PRESENTATION

NWWSO

Rex Huffman, General Counsel for the Northwestern Water and Sewer District, addressed Council to propose that the City of Northwood consider applying to become a member community of the District. Mr. Huffman provided an overview of the District, noting:

- The District was established in 1992–1993 and includes municipalities, townships, and counties.
- Membership has expanded to include numerous communities across Wood, Hancock, Sandusky, and Henry Counties.
- Governance consists of a 10-member Board of Trustees appointed by counties, municipalities, and townships.

He explained that while the District already owns and operates water and sewer infrastructure within Northwood, the City is not currently a formal member. As a result:

- Northwood residents are not eligible to serve on the District's Board of Trustees.
- Membership would allow representation and participation in governance.

Mr. Huffman stated the application process is simple and encouraged Council to consider membership to ensure Northwood representation, particularly given the City's significant presence within the District's service area.

Tom Stalter, retiring Chief Engineer for the District, provided an overview of infrastructure and operations within Northwood:

The District currently maintains and operates aging water and sewer systems throughout the City. Approximately \$15 million has been invested in water and sewer improvements within Northwood. The system has adequate water capacity for future development, though wastewater capacity is more limited and requires ongoing management.

Current and future projects include:

- Sewer system upgrades, particularly in older neighborhoods
- Continued maintenance and replacement of aging infrastructure
- Private lateral repair programs with grant assistance
- Potential future sewer expansion in areas currently served by septic systems (pending EPA involvement and funding)

Mr. Stalter emphasized the District's ability to support economic development and long-term infrastructure planning.

Council members asked questions regarding: Historical concerns or opposition to joining the District (none recent), Financial considerations, including project costs and potential impacts on residents' utility rates (no changes anticipated) Discussion also highlighted: the importance of coordination for economic development and infrastructure planning, the benefit of having Northwood representation on the District's Board and positive past collaboration between the City and the District

Bill Hirzel, current Board of Trustees member, spoke in support of membership, noting:

His long-standing advocacy for Northwood within the District, the value of strong regional water and sewer infrastructure and the importance of continued representation for the City. He strongly recommended that Council move forward with joining the District

March 26, 2026

PUBLIC COMMENT

Brandon Elliott, 2652 Stanford Drive, addressed Council regarding upcoming changes tied to Ohio House Bill 96, specifically cyber compliance requirements impacting financial and budgeting processes beginning in July. He explained that the company he works for has developed a compliance dashboard to help municipalities track cybersecurity posture and prepare for audits. He offered informational materials to the Mayor and City Administrator and requested a follow-up meeting to discuss the service.

William Hirzl, 5423 Ayers Road, Walbridge, spoke on several topics. He encouraged the City to engage local businesses in support of upcoming community celebrations, noting his company's willingness to contribute. He also invited City officials to communicate any concerns regarding Hirzel's directly. Additionally, he discussed company growth areas and emphasized increased community involvement from future generations of leadership. Mr. Hirzel further raised concerns about regional water resources, potential drought conditions, and highlighted the importance of Lake Erie as a key asset. He encouraged consideration of water infrastructure and regional collaboration efforts.

COMMUNICATIONS

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Economic Development Councilor Barton

No Report.

Finance Councilor Dickey - Next meeting 4/9/26 @ 6:30PM

No Report.

Recreation Board Councilor Barton

No Report.

Safety Councilor Kretz

No Report.

Tree Commission Council President Melnyk

No Report.

Service Councilor Edwards

Meeting on April 9th at 6PM to discuss quotes and purchases.

Parks, Rec & NCC Councilor Huntermark - Next meeting 3/26/26 @ 6:45PM

Topics included:

- purchase of bleachers. It was confirmed that the cost will come from the previously budgeted capital line item of \$90,000.

MOTION: Councilor Huntermark made a motion to **approve the purchase of bleachers for the NCC from Martin Public Seating for \$44,792.50**; seconded by Councilor McGaharan. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

- Sunday hours update: Operations will continue through the end of April, with performance monitored based on membership numbers.
- Basketball hoop inspection: A second quote is being obtained for the required inspection due to noise concerns.

Committee of the Whole Council President Melnyk

No Report.

MAYOR Mayor Schimmel

No Report.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR Kevin Laughlin

CITY FINANCIAL REPORT(S)

MOTION: Council President Melnyk made a motion to **acknowledge receipt of the February financial reports**; seconded by Councilor Huntermark. **ROLL CALL: Yes:** Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

February 2026 month end financials

February 2026 bank reconciliation

March 26, 2026

City Administrator's Report

Resolution 2026-03 - This Resolution amends the aggregation service extension period established in Resolution 2026-02, changing the term from June 2026–May 2027 to June 2026–April 2028. Request this Resolution is adopted tonight by emergency.

Request for authorization to sign an MOU with OPBA for the Juneteenth holiday. The city recognized the holiday and it was covered for Administrative staff, however there was no provision with the OPBA contract, so they did not receive it as a holiday. This MOU rectifies this situation.

MOTION: Councilor Dickey made a motion to **authorize the City Administrator to sign the OPBA MOU for the Juneteenth holiday**; seconded by Councilor Huntermark. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

LIST OF EXPENDITURES OVER \$10,000

<u>INVOICE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
THOMAS PORTER ARCHITECTS	PERMIT DRAWINGS FOR FIRE DEPT	\$11,252.10
REINEKE FORD LINCOLN	2026 FORD SUV	\$41,829.00
GEDDIS PAVING & EXCAVATING W. ANDRUS PAVING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT INC		\$273,721.65
DEX IMAGING LLC	SERVER REPLACEMENT PROJECT	\$35,664.00
ANTHEM BLUE CROSS AND BLUE HEALTH & VISION INSURANCE 4/1/26-5/1/26 SHIELD		\$60,693.41
ATLANTIC SOLUTIONS	EMERGENCY TURNOUT GEAR	\$37,305.00
DIRECT FITNESS SOLUTIONS	NCC GYM EQUIPMENT	\$19,997.00

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

RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

NEW RESOLUTION

PENDING RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION 2026-03 AMENDING SECTION 1 OF RESOLUTION 2026-02 ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL OF ARCHER ENERGY, LLC TO EXTEND AN AGREEMENT PROVIDING NATURAL GAS SUPPLIES THROUGH OPT-OUT AGGREGATION TO ELIGIBLE RESIDENTIAL AND SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE CITY OF NORTHWOOD; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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

RESULT: *Passed (6-0) effective immediately*

NEW LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE 2026-12 AMENDING NCO CHAPTER 1240.06 TITLED DEFINITIONS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

1st Reading - Huntermark

ORDINANCE 2026-13 AMENDING SECTIONS OF NCO CHAPTER 1274, C COMMERCIAL DISTRICT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

1st Reading - Huntermark

PENDING LEGISLATION

March 26, 2026

ORDINANCE 2026-10 ADOPTING THE 2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE AS RECOMMENDED BY THE NORTHWOOD PLANNING COMMISSION, AND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT/DISCUSSION Brian Ballenger

No Report.

CITY ENGINEER'S REPORT/DISCUSSION Josh Auman

City Engineer's Report

MOTION: Councilor Huntermark made a motion to **award the Woodville Road Sidewalk project to Perram Electric for \$543,812** ; seconded by Council President Melnyk. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (6-0)*

References for Param Electric were checked and found acceptable, with no issues noted.

The project is scheduled to begin around June 1, 2026, with substantial completion by December 1, 2026, and final completion by December 15, 2026.

Council inquired about the low bid; the concrete work will be subcontracted to Smith Paving, a union contractor with prior experience in the region. Concerns about potential change orders were addressed and deemed unlikely.

Additional Updates:

Discussion of other project timelines: Dalling Rd extension - Sherman Excavating, originally scheduled to start in March for a related project, may begin earlier than May 4, 2026.

Northwest Water replacement project is planned along Woodville Road; a pre-construction meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2026.

NEW BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

Council President Melnyk withdrew the request for the pedestrian safety beacons at the VFW with the potential to revisit discussion at a later date.

Discussion on Council retreat time and date. Date of April 25th with a tentative start time of 10AM to 1-2PM

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Councilor Edwards made a motion to **enter into executive session at 7:53PM with Mayor, Council, City Administrator and City Attorney to discuss ongoing litigation**; seconded by Councilor Huntermark. **ROLL CALL:** **Yes:** Councilor Dickey, Councilor Edwards, Councilor Huntermark, Councilor Kretz, Councilor McGaharan, Council President Melnyk; **No:** None; **Abstain:** None

RESULT: *Passed (6-0) 7:53PM*

The meeting was called back to order at 8:02PM and the roll was called by Council Clerk Popovitch and those in attendance were as follows: Mayor Schimmel, 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.

No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

08:02 PM

ATTEST:

Council Clerk

APPROVED:

Mayor