



Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting
 Held October 6, 2025
 7:00 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Oberlin City Council was held on October 6, 2025, in the Council Chambers of the Oberlin City Hall, located at 85 S. Main Street, Oberlin, Ohio. The Presiding Officer, Michael McFarlin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll Call was taken as follows:

1. COUNCIL BUSINESS

(a) Call Regular City Council Meeting to Order and Roll Call – 7:00 p.m.

Council Members:	Present	Absent
Joseph Waltzer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jessa D. New	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michael McFarlin, Presiding Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ray English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Libni Lopez	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kristin Peterson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eboni A. Johnson, President	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appointees:

Jon Clark, Interim City Manager/Law Director
 Marin Fowler, Interim Finance Director
 Belinda Anderson, Clerk of Council

(b) Approval of Minutes – Regular City Council Meeting – September 2, 2025, and September 15, 2025.

(Clerk notes: the minutes discussion was considered after item d, but has been placed here to maintain continuity.)

New seconded by Lopez moved to amend the September 15, 2025, minutes by striking lines 35 and 36 and inserting the words “September 15, 2025 Work Session minutes.”

Roll Call: 5 Ayes 0 Nays Motion Carried
 (Amended)

New seconded by Waltzer, moved to approve the September 15, 2025, minutes as amended and the September 2, 2025, minutes as submitted.

Roll Call: 5 Ayes 0 Nays Motion Carried

(c) Presentation – National Voter Education Week

Maureen Simen, Voter Registration Activities Coordinator for the League of Women Voters Lorain County, highlighted the importance of National Voter Education Week, an open-source, nonpartisan voter education campaign. The week begins the first week of October, and aims to bridge the gap between voter registration and casting a ballot.

Following the presentation, Council members acknowledged the importance of the initiative and expressed support for efforts to increase voter engagement and participation in the community.

(d) Consider a Motion to Disband the Green Acres Development Committee

Clark remarked that this was a temporary committee created by a motion of the Council. Since the committee's work has concluded, he is requesting a motion that Council terminate the committee.

New seconded by Peterson, moved to disband the Green Acres Development Committee effective immediately.

Roll Call: 5 Ayes 0 Nays Motion Carried

2. ANY CONCERNS NOT ON THE AGENDA MAY BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL AT THIS TIME

Nola Bland from 282 Reserve Avenue, representing Art Conceptions, addressed the Council to request permission to continue using the Oberlin Enrichment and Activity Center for line dancing classes. She explained that the program focuses on health and wellness and currently serves over 35 participants at a cost-effective rate of \$2 per session. Ms. Bland expressed her desire to extend the program beyond the current eight-week session.

McFarlin remarked that he, along with the Council president and City Manager, has received emails from residents in support of this program. The City Manager will be talking with staff about what they can do. Peterson noted firsthand experiencing the enthusiasm for what is going on.

Lopez remarked that, with the recent passage of a countywide ban on conversion therapy by the Cuyahoga County Board of Trustees, this might be an appropriate time for Council to revisit the topic. He asked whether the Council would be interested in having its Law Director draft legislation that they could consider at a future meeting.

McFarlin remarked that he noticed an article on the 19.com site, reporting that the Supreme Court will be taking up this case very soon. He added that this is important for the Law Director to consider, noting that Council would at least like to see a draft prepared.

Clark remarked that he had discussed this issue with Mr. Lopez. He suggested that the Council make a motion to direct him to prepare some legislation for the Council's review and consideration.

Lopez, seconded by Waltzer, moved to direct the law director to prepare some legislation for Council's review and consideration.

Roll Call: 5 Ayes 0 Nays Motion Carried

Ferris Brown, Parmely Avenue, Elyria, Ohio, inquired about the next steps for the Morgan Street property. He expressed interest in drafting a proposal depending on whether the Council decides to sell or demolish the property. McFarlin asked Mr. Holcomb to follow up with Mr. Brown to discuss the matter further.

3. OPPORTUNITY FOR A REPORT FROM A CITY BOARD OR COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE

4. OPPORTUNITY FOR A REPORT FROM AN ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE

Members of Council heard updates on several initiatives from the Community Liaison's office, including reports from:

- Debbi Kelley (Rural Response Network), who provided an update on the grant extension program supporting Oberlin and Wellington residents' recovery from substance use and mental health disorders.
- Cindy Kushner (Lorain County Community College), who briefed Council on Oberlin's Social Equity and Skill Development Promise Initiative.
- Terri Richardson-Sanders (Oberlin Community Liaison), who reported on the Oberlin Medical Debt Relief Initiative, which eliminated more than \$2 million in medical debt for over 1,900 Oberlin residents. She also announced that in June, she submitted an application with their consultants to the American Planning Association for the Norman Krumholz Equity Award, and in mid-August, she was notified that Oberlin was selected as the award recipient.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Ordinance No. 25-51 AC CMS: An Ordinance to Approve the Execution of an Efficiency Smart Schedule with American Municipal Power, Inc

The Clerk read the Ordinance by number, title, and substantive portions.

Peterson, seconded by Lopez, moved to approve the Ordinance on first reading.

Skolnicki remarked that Oberlin is seeking to renew its participation in the Efficiency Smart Program. He noted that the City has been a member since 2011 and that the program has been beneficial to residents. The contracts are issued in three-year terms, and the current contract will expire at the end of the year. Staff recommends renewing the agreement for an additional three-year term.

He introduced representatives Tom Coyle and Bob Golden from Efficiency Smart, along with Tim Boland from Amp Ohio, who were present to provide an overview of the program.

Following the presentation, Peterson, seconded by Lopez, moved to waive the three-reading rule for Ordinance No. 25-51 AC CMS.

Roll Call: 5 Ayes 0 Nays Motion Carried
(Suspension of Rules)

Peterson, seconded by Lopez moved that Ordinance No. 25-51 AC CMS go into immediate effect to provide for the continuation of Efficiency Smart Services, and provided that at least five (5) members of Council determine by motion, to this Ordinance shall go into full force and effect immediately after its passage; otherwise, it shall take effect on the earliest date allowed by law.

Roll Call: 5 Ayes 0 Nays Motion Carried
(Effective Immediately)

- B. Ordinance No. 25-52 AC CMS: An Ordinance Authorizing an Increase in Compensation for the Clerk of Council and Amending Ordinance 07-51 AC CMS as Amended, Appointing the City Clerk/ Clerk of Oberlin City Council to go into Immediate Effect

The Clerk read the Ordinance by number, title, and substantive portions.

Lopez, seconded by Waltzer, moved to read Ordinance 25-52 AC CMS on the first meeting.

New, seconded by Lopez, moved to waive the three-reading rule for Ordinance No. 25-52 AC CMS.

Roll Call: 5 Ayes 0 Nays Motion Carried
(Suspension of Rules)

New, seconded by Peterson, moved that Ordinance No. 25-52 AC CMS go into immediate effect to implement a merit increase for the Clerk of Council to coincide with her anniversary date at the earliest possible date.

Roll Call: 5 Ayes 0 Nays Motion Carried
(Effective Immediately)

- C. Ordinance No. 25-53 AC CMS: An Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into an Agreement with the Nord Family Foundation for the Cooperative Use, Maintenance, Repair, and Improvement of Shared Improvements at Depot Park

The Clerk read the Ordinance by number, title, and substantive portions.

Peterson, seconded by Lopez, approved the Ordinance on first reading.

Members of Council considered an Ordinance to enter into an agreement with the Nord Family Foundation for the cooperative use, maintenance, repair, and improvement of shared improvements at Depot Park. Baumann provided background and an overview of the project and proposed agreement, noting that it will require approval by the foundation's board at their meeting on October 18, 2025. While the agreement specifically addresses shared improvements on the adjoining property, he noted that it would also provide a framework for cost-sharing on the bike path improvements.

Roll Call:
(First Reading)

5 Ayes

0 Nays

Motion Carried

5. COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS:

(A). Referrals

(B). Advocacy

(C). Correspondence

(D). Reports

- Council members provided updates on board and commission meetings, initiatives, community events, and announced upcoming meeting dates.
- Scheduled a special meeting for November 10, 2025, from 4:30–6:30 p.m. to discuss Liaison assignment, leadership roles, and expectations.
- Announced that they are soliciting applications from residents interested in filling board and commission vacancies.
- Reminded Council that the Open Space and Visual Environment Commission is looking for feedback on two recommendations:
 - Initiation of the wayfinding and branding signage initiative
 - Establishment of a Memorial Tree Planting ProgramIt was noted that this may be discussed in a future agenda session to determine the next steps.
- Oberlin has been elected as a voting member of the OMEA Board, an elected official will need to be appointed to that seat.
- Noted Zoning Code changes are currently under review with the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals. He expressed his desire for members of Council to obtain a copy of the Code as soon as possible, noting that it is 160 pages long.

6. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

- City Manager Holcomb summarized the recent events, meetings, tours, and activities he has undertaken since the last Council meeting.
- Mentioned that he has been working with the Finance Director to prepare the budget information, which will be submitted to the City Council in the next couple of weeks.
- Expressed Appreciation to Terri Richardson Sanders and all of the volunteers who contributed to the Social Equity Plan.
- Congratulated OMLPS and Communications Manager Diane Ramos for earning an AMP Award recognizing their public power promotion celebrating OMLPS 's 90th Anniversary.
- Alerted members to the dredging work currently taking place at Westwood Cemetery.

7. OPPORTUNITY FOR OTHER APPOINTEES TO REPORT:

- Finance Director Fowler announced the following:
 - The Council Budget work sessions have been scheduled for November 25 and November 26, from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. She, along with the City Manager, responded to a question concerning priority budget items.
 - She will attend the Ohio Association of Public Treasures Seminar this week.
 - The Finance Department has started implementing a new payroll tracking system.

- Law Director Clark commented that the resolution for the Council Rules requires that any amendment be announced at a meeting before formal consideration.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

9. ADJOURNMENT:

Being that there was no additional business before Council, the regular meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Attest:



BELINDA B. ANDERSON, MMC
CLERK OF COUNCIL



EBONI A. JOHNSON
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

APPROVED: 10/20/2025

POSTED: 10/21/2025