



**Oberlin City Council
Special Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 29, 2026
1:00 p.m.**

A special meeting of the Oberlin City Council was held on June 29, 2026, at the Oberlin Enrichment and Activity Center, located at 36 S. Prospect Street in the Connie Ponder Room.

CALL SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by President Eboni Johnson to discuss goals for the 2026=2027 Council Term.. *Roll Call was taken as follows:*

Council Members:

Eboni Johnson, President
Michael McFarlin, Vice President
Sondra Miller
Libni Lopez
Jessa New
Joseph Waltzer
Kristin Peterson

Present

Absent

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(Lopez and New arrived after roll call)

Appointees:

Greg Holcomb, City Manager
Belinda Anderson, Clerk of Council
Jon Clark, Law Director (Came at the end of the meeting and left shortly after)

Staff Present:

Carrie Porter, Planning and Development Director
Jeff Baumann, Public Works Director
Briana Reynolds, Clerk of Council's Assistant

COUNCIL BUSINESS

A. Reviving the Council News letter

Council discussed reviving a council newsletter to provide the public with accessible updates. Members considered creating a shared council email address for receiving public inquiries and coordinating information provided by the City Manager. Concerns were raised about potential

duplication with existing communication channels. Council member New volunteered to develop newsletter mock-ups during the summer break and agreed to coordinate with the administration to ensure continuity.

B. Use of Immediate Effect for Agenda Items

Council Member Waltzer requested that staff reduce the use of the “immediate effect” designation for agenda items, particularly for significant contracts, to allow the public and Council more time for review. City Manager Holcomb suggested Council consider a formal rule change to clarify expectations. Council members requested that staff include a brief justification in administrative memos when an item is requested to go into immediate effect, noting this would streamline meeting discussions and provide transparency.

C. Convening a budget committee

Council Member Waltzer raised the possibility of establishing a budget committee to review financial positioning and priorities prior to budget season. City Manager Holcomb noted that while committees can be useful, the upcoming implementation of the OpenGov platform may resolve many transparency and reporting issues. Council agreed to pause the establishment of a budget committee until the OpenGov platform is fully implemented and its capabilities are assessed.

BIG DISCUSSIONS

A. Housing – Green Acres builders and plan for future development

City Manager Holcomb presented a proposal for the Green Acres Housing Department, suggesting that the City designate two builders, Norm Bevens and MMY US, to construct homes on the 17 available lots. Several Council members stated a preference for allowing buyers to choose their own builders, while others emphasized the importance of ensuring timely construction, aesthetic consistency, and providing a streamlined process for buyers.

Following discussion, Council reached a consensus to divide the lots by dedicating six lots to Norman Bevens, six lots to MMY US, and leaving five lots open for buyers to utilize a builder of their choice. Council agreed to implement a requirement that construction must commence within 18 months to prevent lots from remaining empty.

B. Bait Canteen Property – OCIC

Planning and Development Director Carrie Porter provided an update on the Bait Canteen property. The Oberlin Community Improvement Corporation (OCIC) is exploring cottage-court development with approximately six units, up to 850 square feet each, to provide affordable housing. OCIC plans to hire a civil engineer for a preliminary lot layout and property surveying. Council expressed support for the project and discussed potential architectural design partnerships. A formal proposal is anticipated in the fall.

C. OEAC Proposal/funding options

City Manager Holcomb reported that staff is working on financial scenarios and phasing models for the Oberlin Education and Activity Center (OEAC) renovation project. Council discussed the need to address immediate issues, such as the failing roof and HVAC system, versus the overall costs of a comprehensive renovation. Council requested a comparative cost analysis detailing the expenses of renovating the existing structure, building a new facility, and demolishing the current building to guide future funding and planning decisions.

D. Process for filling upcoming Council vacancy

Council discussed the procedure for filling the unexpired term of Council Member Lopez, who announced his intention to step down by the end of the year. Law Director Jon Clark advised that the City Charter authorizes the remaining Council members to make the appointment. Council agreed to finalize an application template, formally announce the nomination process in August, and conduct interviews to appoint a replacement prior to the vacancy taking effect.

BRIEF UPDATES**A. New City Website**

City Manager Holcomb stated that a meeting is scheduled for Wednesday to discuss the next steps for the new city website.

B. Multi-Use Path progress

City Manager Holcomb provided an update on the multi-use path. Additional survey and preliminary design work are required to confirm grades and routing. A contract amendment for these services is expected on the July 6 agenda, with a final design proposal anticipated for the August 17 meeting.

C. Economic Development Position/Grant Writer Contract

City Manager Holcomb reported that 19 applications were received for the Economic Development position, and interviews will commence shortly. Regarding the grant writer contract, Holcomb provided a comparison of four firms consisting of McCaulley and Company, Keller Partners and Company, Chase Consulting Solutions, and Avila.

D. Short term rentals/ collecting bed tax

City Manager Holcomb sought feedback on drafting a short-term rental ordinance. Council members expressed support for implementing a bed tax and establishing basic inspection requirements to ensure health and safety compliance. Granicus was mentioned as a potential software partner to manage registration, tax collection, and compliance tracking. Holcomb noted he will continue researching inspection protocols and return with a formal proposal.

ITEMS FOR NEXT WORK SESSION

Council noted the following items will be discussed at the next work session.

- Sidewalk/Multi-use path safety and maintenance/repair plan
- Management of Overgrowth blocking sidewalks and intersections
- Long-short-term rentals property maintenance/code enforcement (Miller)
- Community grants process (New)
- City minimum wage and paternal leave policy (Waltzer)
- Economic Incentives Process (Waltzer)
- How the City supports and engages with community events (Miller)
- Progress and expectations for eco-industrial park.

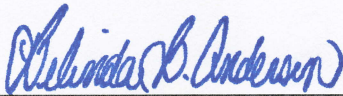
SCHEDULED NEXT MEETING

Members of Council scheduled the next meeting for September 14, 2026 at 1:00 p.m., to be held at the OEAC building.

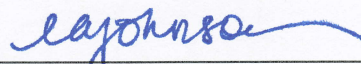
ADJOURNMENT

Since there was no additional information to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Attest:



BELINDA B. ANDERSON
CLERK OF COUNCIL



EBONI A. JOHNSON
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

APPROVED: 07/06/2026

POSTED: 07/07/2026