



**City of Kent**  
**Wednesday, December 20, 2023**  
**Regular City Council Meeting**  
**320 S. Depeyster Street, Kent, OH 44240**

**MINUTES**

At 07:32 PM, Mayor Jerry T. Fiala called the Regular City Council Meeting to order.

**Present:** Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Mr. John Kuhar, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Roger Sidoti, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Tracy Wallach

**Also Present:** Mr. Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor, and President of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Ms. Bridget Susel, Community Development Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Service Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Mr. Nick Shearer, Chief of Police; Mr. Jamie Samels, Interim Fire Chief; Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council

**Absent:** Mr. Garret Ferrara

**MOTION TO EXCUSE MR. GARRET FERRARA MADE BY** Mr. John Kuhar, **SECONDED** by Mr. Jack Amrhein, and **CARRIED** by a voice vote of 8-0-0.

**Opening Remarks**

Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish began by noting the upcoming changes on the council due to the turnover happening in the New Year. She expressed a mix of emotions—excitement for the new council members coming in while acknowledging the sadness of parting ways with current members. Ms. Shaffer Bish highlighted the importance of civility among council members, emphasizing the respect and cooperation they've shown even in times of disagreement. She expressed pride in the council's conduct and its potential to serve as a model for other political bodies. Additionally, Ms. Shaffer Bish extended holiday wishes to everyone present and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Dedication of New City Administration Building**

Ms. Melanie Baker, the Service Director, acknowledged the collaborative effort that led to the development of the new City Hall building. She traced the process back to its initiation in 2016, highlighting the extensive public involvement through surveys, meetings, and festivals to gather input. Ms. Baker mentioned the bid process in the fall 2021, the selection of the contractor, and the subsequent start of construction in 2022. She detailed the milestones achieved, including the beam signing and raising, along with the progress on utilities, construction, and the enclosing of the building.

She then recognized and invited all council members who had been involved in this process since its inception in 2016 to come forward for the dedication of the building. Specifically mentioning Mayor Jerry Fiala, Garrett Ferrara, Jack Amrhein, Robin Turner, John Kuhar,

Heidi Shaffer Bish, Tracy Wallach, Mike DeLeone, Gwen Rosenberg, and Roger Sidoti, Ms. Baker asked Mr. Kuhar and Ms. Wallach to unveil the dedication plaque, officially dedicating Kent City Hall to the residents, businesses, and citizens of Kent. Afterward, she thanked everyone involved and pictures were taken of council members with the plaque that will be placed in the new city hall building.

## **Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION TO APPROVE NOVEMBER 15, 2023 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MADE BY** Mr. Jack Amrhein, **SECONDED** by Mr. Roger Sidoti and **CARRIED** by a voice vote of 8-0-0.

## **Communications**

Mayor Fiala read the following statement:

"While the law does not require Council to provide time for public comment, we have historically invited the public to make comments and we appreciate their input. This is the time when residents and others can comment on matters that concern them. However, we will not engage in debate, and as President of Council, I reserve the right to end any public communication that is disruptive, embarrassing, harassing, or otherwise objectionable. We ask you to give your name and address and limit comments to three (3) minutes."

There was one member of the public who signed in. Ms. Wilkens, Clerk of Council, called Mr. Mitchell Edgecomb, who resides at 57 Chelmsford Drive, in Aurora, to come to the podium and address the Council. He addressed the council about the inhumane practices in the fur industry, emphasizing the local implication of this larger issue. He highlighted the appalling conditions in which fur-bearing animals are kept, mentioning their confinement in small cages, unsanitary living conditions, and cruel methods of killing them for their fur. He linked the fur industry to environmental damage, citing statistics about its high carbon footprint and water pollution compared to other textiles. Mr. Edgecomb presented a proposed ordinance to ban the sale, auction, and manufacture of fur products from factory farms, excluding fur trapping activities and leather from agricultural animals. He argued that this move aligns with a growing public sentiment for banning fur sales and promotes a more sustainable clothing industry. Expressing belief in the inevitable decline of the fur industry due to decreasing statistics in fur production, Mr. Edgecomb urged the council to consider adopting the proposed ordinance, aiming to represent the interests of the city and contribute to a more sustainable future for wildlife and the environment. He requested the ordinance to be reviewed and potentially adopted into law by the appropriate council body or commission. A handout was presented to Council (**Attachment #1**)

There were no other residents signed in to speak to Council.

## **Written Communication**

1. Email from Rick Hawksley regarding the status of street repairs on Portage Street was received on November 18, 2023.
2. Email from Dustin Holfinger, State Government Relation Director for the American Heart Association regarding the possible Governor's veto of tobacco preemption language was received on November 20, 2023.
3. Email from Kayla Adolph regarding Climate Pollution Reduction Grants that are available through the EPA was forwarded to Council on November 29, 2023.
4. Request for an Updated List of City Elected Officials from the Ohio Ethics Commission was received, completed, and returned on November 28, 2023.



5. Email from Benjamin Tipton and Main Street Kent commending Jim Bowling on addressing the pressing issue of pedestrian safety in downtown Kent with permanent 12-month installation of in-street pedestrian crosswalk signs was received and forwarded to Council on November 30, 2023.
6. Email from Doug Fuller, asking Council not to approve the Design Guidelines as presented, was received and forwarded to Council on December 6, 2023.
7. Standing Rock Cemetery Board of Trustees December meeting agenda was received on December 5, 2023.
8. Health Board Agenda Meeting Minutes for the December meeting were received on December 7, 2023.

### **City Manager's Report**

**MOTION TO APPROVE CITY MANAGER'S REPORT MADE BY Mr. Jack Amrhein, SECONDED by Mr. John Kuhar and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0-0.**

1. Requests Council's authorization to send a letter of support to the Portage County Land Bank to utilize Brownfield Remediation Program grant funding to complete necessary assessment activities at 200 West William Street in Kent.
2. Request for Council's authorization to apply for an Ohio Department of Job and Family Services childcare stabilization sub-grant in the amount of \$94,500, and if approved, to accept and allocate those funds.
3. Request for Council's authorization to apply for an Ohio Department of Development Wastewater Infrastructure grant for \$1 million to be used as part of the capital needed for the \$7.7 million replacement of the heat exchangers at the City Water Reclamation facility, and if approved to accept and allocate the funds, and authorize the subsequent grant agreements.
4. .Scheduled Committee of the Whole time for Council to consider applicants for City Boards and Commissions.
5. Request for Committee of the Whole time for Council to discuss the 2024 Committee assignments.
6. Request for Committee of the Whole time to provide Council with a brief update on the status of the new City Hall construction project.
7. Request for the Committee of the Whole time to present an update to the Council Pending list for 2024.
8. Request Land Use Committee time to discuss a possible temporary moratorium on recreational marijuana sales locations.
9. Request for Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee time to allow representatives from the Chamber, Main Street Kent, and City staff to present an update on the status of the 2024 Eclipse event in Kent and ask for corresponding downtown street closures.
10. Request for Street, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee time to present suggested changes to the City's street closure policy for special events.
11. Request Finance Committee time to request Council's approval of multiple Health Department grant applications and appropriations.

### **Standing Committees & Legislation**

**Committee of the Whole** Chair Mayor Fiala/ Vice-Chair Amrhein

**MOTION TO APPROVE DECEMBER 6, 2023 COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0-0.**

**Action(s) Recommended: None**

**Draft 2023- 087** A RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION AND APPRECIATION TO THE HONORABLE GARRET FERRARA FOR THE GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION OF HIS TIME AND TALENTS AS WARD 1 COUNCIL FOR THE PAST TWENTY-FOUR YEARS was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF DRAFT 2023- 087 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023- 087 MADE by Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Resolution 2023–087 passes.**

**Draft 2023- 088** A RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION AND APPRECIATION TO THE HONORABLE JOHN KUCHAR FOR THE GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION OF HIS TIME AND TALENTS AS WARD 4 COUNCIL FOR THE PAST EIGHTEEN YEARS was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023- 088 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023- 088 MADE by Mr. Michael DeLeone, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Resolution 2023–088 passes.**

**Draft 2023- 089** A RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION AND APPRECIATION TO THE HONORABLE TRACY WALLACH FOR THE GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION OF HER TIME AND TALENTS AS WARD 6 COUNCIL FOR THE PAST SIXTEEN YEARS was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023- 089 MADE by Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. John Kuhar. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023- 089 MADE by Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 7-0-1 with Ms. Wallach voting 'abstain'.



**Resolution 2023-089 passes.**

**Health & Safety Committee** Chair Amrhein/ Vice-Chair Sidoti

Committee Minutes: None

Action(s) Recommended: Authorized 11/15/23

**Draft 2023-081** (3rd Reading) AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 351 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF KENT TITLED "PARKING GENERALLY", AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO ADOPT DRAFT 2023-081 MADE by Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, and Ms. Tracy Wallach. The motion was CARRIED by a roll call vote of 6-2-0. Ms. Rosenberg and Mr. Sidoti voted 'No'.

**Ordinance 2023-081 passes.**

**Land Use Committee** Chair Ferrara/ Vice-Chair Shaffer Bish

**MOTION TO APPROVE DECEMBER 6, 2023 COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES** MADE BY Mr. Michael DeLeone, SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0-0.

**Action(s) Recommended**

1. Authorize zoning on Johnson Road from medium residential (R-2) to open space/recreational, with the emergency clause.
2. Adopt revised Design Guidelines and remove old design guidelines from the zoning code, with the emergency clause.

**MOTION TO APPROVE ACTION(S) RECOMMENDED** MADE BY Mr. Michael DeLeone, SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0-0.

**Draft 2023-090** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY'S ZONING DISTRICTS MAP FOR PARCEL #17-046-00-00-019-009 TO BE REZONED TO O-R: OPEN SPACE-RECREATION DISTRICT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023-090 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023-090 MADE by Mr. Heidi Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-090 passes.**

**Draft 2023- 091** AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING CHANGES TO THE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND PART ELEVEN - PLANNING AND ZONING CODE, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023- 091 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, and Mr. Roger Sidoti. The motion was CARRIED by a roll call vote of 7-1-0. Ms. Wallach voted 'No'.

Councilmember Tracy Wallach expressed her intention to vote against the presented proposals, citing her belief that the two different design guidelines should be integrated more cohesively.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023- 091 MADE by Mr. Jack Amrhein, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 6-2-0. Mr. Amrhein and Ms. Wallach voted 'No'.

**Ordinance 2023–091 passes.**

**Finance Committee** Chair DeLeone/ Vice-Chair Wallach

**MOTION TO APPROVE DECEMBER 6, 2023 COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES** MADE BY Mr. Michael DeLeone, SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0-0.

**Action(s) Recommended**

1. Authorize the renewal of the Portage County Public Defender's contract for 2024 with an emergency clause.
2. Authorize the 2024 City Operating Budget, including the 3% water and sewer rate increases with the emergency clause.
3. Approve the 2023 Budget Appropriation amendment with an emergency clause.
4. Approve "then and now" purchases incurred in 2023 over \$3,000, with an emergency clause.
5. Approve the Position Allocation and General Compensation Plan with an emergency clause.
6. Authorize the AFSME Collective Bargaining Agreement with an emergency clause.
7. Authorize the FOP Collective Bargaining Agreement with an emergency clause.
8. Authorized the IAFF Collective Bargaining Agreement with an emergency clause.

**MOTION TO APPROVE ACTION(S) RECOMMENDED** MADE BY Mr. Michael DeLeone, SECONDED by Mr. Kuhar and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0-0.

**MOTION TO AUTHORIZE DRAFTS 2023-104 and 2023-105 AND SUSPEND COUNCIL'S STANDING RULES** MADE BY Mr. Michael DeLeone, SECONDED by Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0-0.

**DRAFT 2023-092** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 913.05 OF THE KENT CODIFIED ORDINANCES, INCREASING THE WATER RATES OF THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO BY THREE PERCENT (3%) BEGINNING WITH THE FIRST BILLING CYCLE IN JANUARY 2024, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF DRAFT 2023-092 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack



Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT DRAFT 2023-092 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-092 passes.**

**DRAFT 2023-093** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 915.72 OF THE KENT CODIFIED ORDINANCES, INCREASING THE SEWER RATES OF THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO BY THREE PERCENT (3%) BEGINNING WITH THE FIRST BILLING CYCLE IN JANUARY, 2024, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF DRAFT 2023-093 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT DRAFT 2023-093 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-093 passes.**

**Draft 2023-094** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO CONTRACT, ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF KENT, WITH THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER, PORTAGE COUNTY, FOR THE PROVISION OF LEGAL COUNSEL TO INDIGENT PERSONS CHARGED WITH POTENTIAL PENALTY OF INCARCERATION FOR OFFENSES COMMITTED IN VIOLATION OF THE ORDINANCES OF SAID CITY FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2024, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2024, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023-094 MADE by Michael DeLeone, SECONDED by Mr. Kuhar. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023-094 MADE by Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-094 passes.**

**DRAFT 2023-095** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE FINANCE DIRECTOR, UPON THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, TO PAY CERTAIN PURCHASE ORDERS MADE THAT EXCEED \$3000.00, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF DRAFT 2023-095 MADE by Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen



Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti. The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT DRAFT 2023-095 MADE by Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Roger Sidoti. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti. The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-095 passes.**

**DRAFT 2023-096** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2022-137 THE POSITION ALLOCATION AND GENERAL COMPENSATION PLAN, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF DRAFT 2023-096 MADE by Ms. Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT DRAFT 2023-096 MADE by Ms. Shafferr Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-096 passes.**

**DRAFT 2023-097** AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING THE VARIOUS FUNDS OF THE CITY OF KENT TO INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE CITY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2024, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF DRAFT 2023-097 MADE by Mr. Kuhar, SECONDED by Ms. Wallach. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT DRAFT 2023-097 MADE by Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-097 passes.**

**DRAFT 2023-098** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2022-138, THE CURRENT APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE, PASSED DECEMBER 21, 2022; SO AS TO ADJUST APPROPRIATIONS, TRANSFERS AND ADVANCES FROM THE VARIOUS FUNDS OF THE CITY OF KENT TO INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE CITY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF DRAFT 2023-098 MADE by Ms. Tracy Wallach, SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.



MOTION TO ADOPT DRAFT 2023-098 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-098 passes.**

**Draft 2023-099** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE FINAL YEAR OF THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF KENT AND THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES (AFSCME), OHIO COUNCIL 8, LOCAL 379, AFL-CIO, AND AUTHORIZING A NEW COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH AFSCME FOR THE PERIOD OF NOVEMBER 1, 2024 THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2026, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023-099 MADE by Mr. Michael DeLeone, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023-099 MADE by Ms. Tracy Wallach, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-099 passes.**

**Draft 2023- 100** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF KENT AND THE CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE UNIT, FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE, OHIO LABOR COUNCIL FOR THE PERIOD OF NOVEMBER 1, 2023 THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2026, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023- 100 MADE by Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023- 100 MADE by Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-100 passes.**

**Draft 2023-101** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF KENT AND POLICE OFFICER UNIT, FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE, OHIO LABOR COUNCIL FOR THE PERIOD OF NOVEMBER 1, 2023 THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2026, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023-101 MADE by Ms. Tracy Wallach, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.



MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023-101 MADE by Ms. Tracy Wallach, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-101 passes.**

**Draft 2023-102** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF KENT AND THE DISPATCH UNIT, FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE, OHIO LABOR COUNCIL FOR THE PERIOD OF NOVEMBER 1, 2023 THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2026 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023-102 MADE by Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023-102 MADE by Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-102 passes.**

**Draft 2023- 103** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF KENT AND LOCAL UNION #721, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIREFIGHTERS FOR THE PERIOD OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2023 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2026, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023- 103 MADE by Mr. Michael DeLeone, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023- 103 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023–103 passes.**

**Draft 2023-104** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF KENT TO SUBMIT A GRANT FUNDING APPLICATION TO THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT (ODOD) FOR THE WATER RECLAMATION FACILITY DIGESTER HEAT EXCHANGER PROJECT AND TO ACCEPT THE GRANT, IF AWARDED, AND EXECUTE THE SUBSEQUENT GRANT AGREEMENT WITH CORRESPONDING APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023-104 MADE by Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023-104 MADE by Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr.



Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-104 passes.**

**Draft 2023-105** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF KENT PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT TO SUBMIT A FOURTH ROUND OF STABILIZATION GRANTS FROM THE OHIO CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL ASSOCIATION (OCCRRA) TOTALING \$94,500, TO EXECUTE THE SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT AND TO ACCEPT THE GRANTS, IF AWARDED, WITH CORRESPONDING APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THREE (3) CHILDCARE CENTERS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read by title only by Clerk Wilkens.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE THREE READINGS OF Draft 2023-105 MADE by Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti. The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

MOTION TO ADOPT Draft 2023-105 MADE by Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone. On Roll Call Voting "Yes" Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Ms. Tracy Wallach, and Mr. Roger Sidoti The motion CARRIED by a roll call vote of 8-0-0.

**Ordinance 2023-105 passes.**

**Unfinished Business**

During Unfinished Business, Mr. Kuhar took a moment to express his gratitude to everyone on the council, in the administration, and those who have supported him throughout his tenure. He appreciated the collaborative environment and thanked everyone for their support and cooperation, wishing everyone a happy and healthy holiday season in return.

Mr. Amrhein recognized council members who were leaving, acknowledged the service of Mr. John Kuhar, and presented him with a plaque and a resolution, thanking him for his 18 years of service. Next, he presented a plaque and framed resolution to Ms. Tracy Wallach expressed their gratitude, and bid farewell. Similarly, Mr. Garrett Ferrara was acknowledged, and gifts were given as a token of appreciation for his service on the council. Mayor Fiala encouraged the council members to take their nameplates as mementos.

**New Business**

There was a swearing-in ceremony for newly elected officials. Melissa Celko (Ward 1) was the first to be sworn in and was done so by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg. The oath administered required her to affirm her support for, uphold, and defend the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of Ohio, and the laws of the City of Kent. She pledged to faithfully, honestly, diligently, and impartially perform and discharge all the powers and duties incumbent upon her as a council member for the City of Kent.

Next, Ms. Hope Jones administered the oath to both Mr. Jack Amrhein (Ward 2) and Mr. Jeff Clapper (Ward 6).

Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish administered the oath to Mr. Chris Hook (Ward 4).



Mr. Randy Bish administered the oath to Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish (Ward 5).

Next, Ms. Tracy Wallach wanted to make a motion under New Business.

**MOTION TO SEND TO COMMITTEE A DISCUSSION ABOUT FUR INDUSTRY AND WHETHER WE ARE GOING TO DO AN ORDINANCE MADE BY Ms. Tracy Wallach, SECONDED by Jack Amrhein and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0-0.**

### **Councilmembers' Comments**

Mr. Robin Turner expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the departing council members, acknowledging their contributions and impact on the community. He highlighted the advancements and positive changes within the community that were achieved through their service. Mr. Turner recognized the differences in perspectives among council members but emphasized their ability to set aside these differences for the greater good of the community, guided by a shared commitment to doing what was right. He extended his appreciation on behalf of the community, noting the relevance and meaningfulness of their service. Mr. Turner commended their dedication with a final "bravo."

In Mr. Ferrara's absence, he asked Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council, to read his parting comments.

Mr. Ferrara wrote, "I was so looking forward to tonight, my last night on city council. 24 years ago, it was a great honor to be sworn in in the same building that was my grandparents' grocery store. My grandmother, Philomena and my great aunts Genevieve and Jenny ---better known as Nanny and Dolly, who worked their entire lives at the store were there, as were my parents and my wife, Michele. They were all there to make the night special. It was a memorable night and while I can't say that I knew what I was doing....and some people might say, "nothing's changed" ... I did know what I wanted Kent to become. The support of my family has always been critical to my success. Likewise, I've always tried to support our girls as they pursue their dreams. Gianna is now a sophomore at Bates College in Maine and has made the Dean's list for all three semesters... She will probably kill me for saying that, however .....we are extremely proud, and we pay the tuition, so I can say what I want. Ironically, my daughter Francesca had ski races in ME this week, and we had a master plan where I was flying home to be at the meeting tonight and Michele was flying up to watch a race and drive her home. Just goes to show that even the best-made plans can't account for Mother Nature. The rain this week washed out the access road from our hotel, so we've been hunkered down awaiting a makeshift bridge to allow access back to the main roads. While I'm extremely disappointed that I can't personally be there for this final meeting, the opportunity to support and watch these two young ladies chase their dreams was and is the biggest factor in my decision to step down. It has been a transformative 24 years for all of us, and we are all aware and proud of what Kent has become, so I don't want to talk about that tonight. I want to talk about the people who have made it possible in both the past and the present.

First, I have to thank John Flynn. He challenged me to run for office and make a difference. Second, my family. Without their support, I couldn't have and wouldn't have been able to serve. Third, the residents of Ward 1. If not for them, I wouldn't have served 24 years. Thank you. If you have never run for an elected position, you will never know the angst, anxiety, and responsibility that comes with running for office. It is extremely humbling and anyone who has run for office has my utmost respect. So, another Thank You to the residents of Ward 1 for your confidence in me. Fourth, I'd like to acknowledge all the former council members and city employees I worked with. At the end of the day, we all stand on the shoulders of those who served before us. They all helped shape future councils ...one way or the other. I'd be remiss if I didn't name a few. Bill Shultz...legendary in so many ways. Wayne Wilson, Ron Heineking, John Nemec, Rick Hawksley, Carol Neff, Mayor Fender, Linda Jordan, Jim Silver, Lou Steinbrecker. Gene Roberts, Dave Moreno, and Bill Lillick. To name just a few. Fifth, I'd like to personally thank everyone on the current council and our Mayor. I'd like to say it has been a pleasure to serve with every one of you. Thank you for treating the position and your other council members with respect, thank you for your humility, thank you for putting policy above politics and personal recognition, and thank you for not making the council a politicized bully pulpit



pushing the politics of the day.

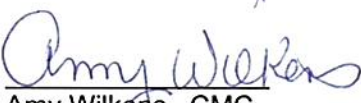
I respect each of you for your service and commitment to Kent. I also respect your opinions and am thankful that we can gather socially and interact as friends and coworkers even after a meeting where we may not have agreed on a particular item or issue. That is truly special, and I hope you take it upon yourselves to integrate the new council members into this unique dynamic. Sixth: I want to extend the new council members my best wishes and my hopes for a seamless transition. Seventh, I'd like to acknowledge and thank the people who make sure the day-to-day functions of the city never become an issue for the citizens of Kent and thus never become an issue for council members. The City Administration and City Employees are truly what makes the city great and makes the council look good. "Government" is a catch-all phrase that people will say or use to describe inefficiencies and often indifference. I've never seen that with our employees. You all work hard and are passionate about the quality of your work. Thank you. Bridget Susel, Jim Bowling, Melanie Baker, Hope Jones, Rhonda Hall, Joan Seidel, Chief Shearer, Lieutenant Mike Lewis, Suzanne Stemnock, and Amy Wilkens all make the city run, and I would be remiss to not thank you and acknowledge all the help you have given to me over the years. Thank you seems so ephemeral...but my gratitude and respect will go well beyond my time on council. Thank you... Thank you... Thank you.

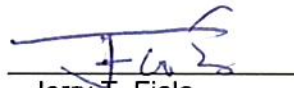
Lastly.... I have to take this opportunity to clear my conscience and admit to my mistakes....and while there are many...one stands out above all. I believe the most important job I've ever done on City Council is to hire our City Manager. And while you will not find a bigger supporter, fan, and advocate for Dave Ruller than me... notwithstanding his wife and kids...on most days... It is time for me to finally admit my mistake in front of this public body. Dave Ruller was not my first choice for our city manager. I feel shame to admit it, but I must leave this role with a clear conscience. I like to win, and I like to be right. But I am not so vain as to not acknowledge my mistakes. And, typical Dave, every day I come to council he makes a point of proving me wrong. So, today I reveal my Scarlet Letter, but I do so not for absolution but to recognize what a privilege and honor it has been to work with Dave Ruller, and to say "thank you" for all that you have done for me personally, for this city, and our community. I know you will continue to strive to make Kent the best that it can be. I have been inspired by you and I look forward to the time when you are recognized for all your contributions to this great city. I can assure you, I'll be leading the charge. Thank you to everyone .... Serving this city has been an honor and a greater experience than anything I could have wished for."

### Mayor's Comments

The mayor highlighted the importance of respecting diverse opinions while also enjoying each other's company, acknowledging that everyone holds their own perspective. He extended holiday wishes, emphasizing the significance of respecting the various ways people choose to celebrate.

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

  
Amy Wilkens, CMC  
Clerk of Council

  
Jerry T. Fiala  
Mayor & President of Council

Any person who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication or a modification of policies and procedures to participate in any City or City Council public meeting or event should contact the Clerk of Council at 330-676-7555 or [councilclerk@kent-ohio.org](mailto:councilclerk@kent-ohio.org). Any request for auxiliary aid or other accommodation should be made as soon as possible, but no later than forty-eight hours prior to the event.

