



City of Kent

City Council Committee Meeting

319 S. Water St., Kent, Ohio 44240

June 4, 2025

MINUTES

At 6:45pm, Mayor Jerry T. Fiala called the City Council Committee meeting to order.

Present: Jack Amrhein; Melissa Celko; Jeff Clapper; Michael DeLeone; Gwen Rosenberg; Heidi Shaffer Bish; Roger Sidoti

Also present: Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of Council; Dave Ruller, City Manager; Hope Jones, Law Director; Angela Manley, Parks & Recreation Director; Bridget Susel, Community Development Director; Nick Cecil, IT Director; Rhonda Hall, Budget and Finance Director; Dominique Bollenbacher, Community Engagement Coordinator; Nick Shearer, Chief of Police, Jamie Samels, Fire Chief, Kathy Coleman, Clerk of Council

PUBLIC HEARING: Program Year 2025 Community Housing Impact and Preservation Program. There were no comments from the public.

Motion to excuse Mr. Turner was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Mr. Hook and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board and Commission Interview

Council interviewed Ms. Stacey Wilson for re-appointment to the PARTA Board. Ms. Wilson expressed her desire to remain on the board and was excited about new projects PARTA has planned, such as the plan to re-evaluate and revise their existing routes to accommodate the current needs of passengers. The mayor advised that Council will vote on appointments at the regular meeting on June 18, 2025.

COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – Chair Fiala/Vice-Chair Amrhein

Changes to Civil Service Commission Language

Ms. Jones advised Council that the Civil Service Commission unanimously approved changes to the Rules and Regulations regarding the hiring practices for the Chief of Police and Fire Chief positions. Specifically, permitting outside candidates to apply for the Chief of Police position,

and including an interview with the City Manager as part of the hiring process for both chief positions, with the interview accounting for 10 percent of the score.

Motion to approve changes to the Civil Service Commission language with the emergency clause was made by Ms. Rosenberg, seconded by Ms. Shaffer Bish, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Community Engagement Office Update

Ms. Bollenbacher provided an update to Council regarding the activities planned for the summer, which include a ribbon cutting ceremony for City Hall prior to the regular Council meeting on June 18, summer movie nights in various parks around the city, and a “Yard of the Month” neighborhood beautification award. Council was pleased with the positive nature of the events and highlighting the good rather than the negative.

Motion to approve up to \$1,000 for the summer events with the emergency clause was made by Mr. Hook, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – Chair Rosenberg/Vice-Chair Clapper

Program Year 2025 Community Housing Impact and Preservation Grant Application

Ms. Susel requested Council’s approval to submit the PY 2025 Community Housing Impact and Preservation (CHIP) funding application to the State of Ohio Department of Development. CHIP funds are used by the Community Development Department to subsidize owner-occupied housing rehabilitation projects.

Motion to authorize Community Development to submit the PY 2024 CHIP funding application as presented with the emergency clause was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Ms. Celko, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Chair DeLeone/Vice-Chair Celko

Parks & Recreation Master Plan Funding Update

Ms. Manley provided an update to Council regarding project priorities, funding needs, and possible funding sources for future discussion. She stated the document was intended to be used as a foundation for strategic planning to accomplish the Master Plan goals.

HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE – Chair Amrhein/Vice-Chair Sidoti

No action.

LAND USE COMMITTEE – Chair Shaffer Bish/Vice-Chair Hook***Proposed New Surface Easement Agreement 266 N. Water Street***

Ms. Susel presented a request for a new surface easement at the City's property at 266 N. Water Street from the adjacent property owners at 300 N. Water St. (John and Rita Kuhar) for access to their property.

Motion to enter into the easement agreement with the emergency clause was made by Ms. Rosenberg, seconded by Ms. Celko, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

STREETS, SIDEWALKS & UTILITIES COMMITTEE – Chair Sidoti/Vice-Chair Clapper***New Special Event Permit Requests***

Ms. Susel requested Council's authorization for new special event permits for the Summer Revival: Golden Hour Market and Fall Revival Harvest Vintage Market to be hosted by Branded in Kent. These events are similar to Branded's "Earth Day Vendor Market" which was held on April 19, 2025 and was very successful. Branded is requesting closure of East Erie Street between South Water Street and the private alley (used as a drive through lane by Tree City Coffee) from 9am to 8pm on July 26, 2025 and September 20, 2025.

Motion to authorize the new special event permits for the Summer Revival: Golden Hour Market and Fall Revival Harvest Vintage Market and corresponding street closures as presented with the emergency clause was made by Mr. Amrhein, seconded by Ms. Shaffer Bish, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Special Event Permit: 2025 Wizardly World Event – Modified Street Closure

Ms. Heather Malarcik of Main Street Kent requested an adjustment from the approved street closure plan for Wizardly World, scheduled for July 18-19, 2025, to include closing a portion of Burbick Way alley for improved safety of attendees.

Motion to authorize the proposed street closure change to include a portion of Burbick Way Alley for the Wizardly World event as presented with the emergency clause was made by Ms. Rosenberg, seconded by Ms. Shaffer Bish, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to move into Executive Session to discuss Board and Commission appointments was made by Mr. Amrhein, seconded by Mr. Hook, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Motion to excuse Mr. Turner was made by Mr. Hook, seconded by Mr. Amrhein, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Council moved into Executive Session at 7:54.

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT

Council returned to regular session at 8:06 and the meeting was adjourned.