



# City of Kent

## Regular City Council Meeting

319 S. Water Street, Kent, Ohio 44240

July 16, 2025

## MINUTES

At 7:00pm, Mayor Jerry T. Fiala called the Regular City Council meeting to order.

Present: Mr. Jack Amrhein; Ms. Melissa Celko; Mr. Jeff Clapper; Mr. Michael DeLeone; Mr. Chris Hook; Ms. Gwen Rosenberg; Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish; Mr. Roger Sidoti; Mr. Robin Turner

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. Dominique Bollenbacher, Community Outreach Coordinator; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Mr. Nick Shearer, Chief of Police; Ms. Melanie Baker, Services Director; Ms. Kathy Coleman, Clerk of Council

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### PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING DORA CONTINUATION

No public comment.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:05pm, Mr. DeLeone moved to go into executive session to discuss Board/Commission appointments. Ms. Rosenberg seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

At 7:12pm, Council returned to regular session.

### OPENING REMARKS AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Celko offered thanks to the staff and everyone involved in the City Hall tours during Heritage Fest, and recognized Ms. Jones and Ms. Coleman for their work with the Charter Review Commission. She then led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance

### COMMUNICATIONS

Public Comment:

- Council received comments from Mr. Brian Gray of Morris Road, and Charter Review Commissioners Tom Mahon, Craig Berger, Jason Gartland, and Barb Springer.

Written Communication:

- On June 27, 2025, the June minutes and July agenda for the Standing Rock Cemetery Board were received and posted online.
- On July 3, 2025, the June minutes and July agenda for the Board of Health were received.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

MOTION TO APPROVE ITEMS 1-13 OF THE CITY MANAGER'S REPORT was made by Mr. Amrhein, seconded by Ms. Celko, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

MOTION TO SUSPEND THREE READINGS OF DRAFTS 2025-056 THROUGH 2025-061 AND 2025-064 was made by Ms. Rosenberg, seconded by Mr. Sidoti, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Mr. DeLeone, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

- Approval of June Regular Council Meeting minutes
- Approval of July Council Committee Meeting minutes
- Approval of July Special Meeting minutes
- **DRAFT 2025-056** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE KENT FIRE DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR A "STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE" (SAFER) GRANT THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND FEMA, AND TO ACCEPT ANY GRANT, IF AWARDED, WITH CORRESPONDING APPROPRIATIONS OF FUNDS WHICH PROVIDES FUNDING FOR THREE (3) FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC POSITIONS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-057** A RESOLUTION CONDUCTING A FIVE-YEAR REVIEW OF THE DESIGNATED OUTDOOR REFRESHMENT AREA AND APPROVING CONTINUED OPERATION IN SPECIFIED PUBLIC AREAS OF DOWNTOWN KENT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-058** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF KENT TO SUBMIT A FUNDING APPLICATION TOTALING \$1,000,000 AND TO EXECUTE THE SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION (OPWC), AND TO ACCEPT THE GRANT, IF AWARDED, WITH CORRESPONDING APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-059** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER OR HIS DESIGNEE TO APPROVE A NEW SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION FROM AXESSPOINTE COMMUNITY SERVICES KNOWN AS "GRILL FOR GOOD" TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2025, AND THE TEMPORARY CLOSURE

OF NORTH WATER STREET BEGINNING AT EAST MAIN STREET AND EXTENDING NORTH TO ALLEY 3 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **DRAFT 2025-060** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER OR HIS DESIGNEE TO APPROVE A NEW SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION FROM MAIN STREET KENT KNOWN AS “THE LONGEST TABLE” TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 3, 2025, AND THE TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF WEST MAIN STREET BETWEEN RIVER STREET AND NORTH WATER STREET AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-061** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE OUTDOOR SEATING PROGRAM GUIDELINES TO ALIGN WITH THE CITY’S CURRENT NOISE ORDINANCE REGULATIONS AND TO REMOVE THE PROHIBITION OF ALCOHOL BEING SERVED AT OUTSIDE TABLES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-064** 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.

Consent agenda passes.

## STANDING COMMITTEES AND LEGISLATION

### Committee of the Whole – Chair Mayor Fiala/Vice-Chair Amrhein

#### Board/Commission Appointments

- Motion to appoint Christopher Syphrit to the Board of Building Appeals was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Mr. Hook; and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to authorize insertion of the name into Draft 2025-062 was made by Mr. Amrhein, seconded by Mr. Clapper, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to suspend 3 readings of Draft 2025-062 was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to adopt Draft 2025-062 was made by Ms. Rosenberg, seconded by Mr. Clapper, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DRAFT 2025-062** A RESOLUTION APPOINTING CHRISTOPHER SYPHRIT TO THE BOARD OF BUILDING APPEALS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**Draft 2025-062 passes.**

- Motion to appoint Cara Wolfram Evans to the Fair Housing Board was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg; and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to authorize insertion of the name into Draft 2025-063 was made by Mr. DeLeone, seconded by Mr. Clapper, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to suspend 3 readings of Draft 2025-063 was made by Ms. Rosenberg, seconded by Mr. Sidoti, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

- Motion to adopt Draft 2025-063 was made by Mr. DeLeone, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DRAFT 2025-063** A RESOLUTION APPOINTING CARA WOLFGRAM EVANS TO THE FAIR HOUSING BOARD AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**Draft 2025-063 passes.**

#### **Charter Review Amendments**

- Motion to suspend 3 readings of Draft 2025-065 was made by Ms. Celko, seconded by Mr. Sidoti, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to adopt Draft 2025-065 was made by Mr. Sidoti, seconded by Mr. DeLeone, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DRAFT 2025-065** AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 4, 2025, WHICH WILL AMEND THE “PREAMBLE” AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**Draft 2025-065 passes.**

- Motion to suspend 3 readings of Draft 2025-066 was made by Mr. DeLeone, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to adopt Draft 2025-066 was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Mr. Sidoti, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DRAFT 2025-066** AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 4, 2025, WHICH WILL AMEND ARTICLE V, SECTION 5.01 TITLED “COUNCIL & MAYOR” AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**Draft 2025-066 passes.**

- Motion to suspend 3 readings of Draft 2025-067 was made by Mr. Sidoti, seconded by Mr. Clapper, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to adopt Draft 2025-067 was made by Mr. Sidoti, seconded by Mr. DeLeone, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DRAFT 2025-067** AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 4, 2025, WHICH WILL AMEND ARTICLE V, SECTION 5.03 TITLED “REMOVAL” AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**Draft 2025-067 passes.**

- Motion to suspend 3 readings of Draft 2025-068 was made by Ms. Celko, seconded by Mr. DeLeone, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to adopt Draft 2025-068 was made by Ms. Celko, seconded by Mr. Sidoti, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DRAFT 2025-068** AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 4, 2025, WHICH WILL AMEND ARTICLE V, SECTION 5.15 TITLED “RECALL PETITION AND ELECTION” AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**Draft 2025-068 passes.**

- Motion to suspend 3 readings of Draft 2025-069 was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Mr. DeLeone, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to adopt Draft 2025-066 was made by Ms. Rosenberg, seconded by Mr. Sidoti, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DRAFT 2025-069** AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 4, 2025, WHICH WILL AMEND ARTICLE VI, SECTION 6.03 TITLED “CITY MANAGER” AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**Draft 2025-069 passes.**

- Motion to suspend 3 readings of Draft 2025-070 was made by Mr. Sidoti, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to adopt Draft 2025-070 was made by Ms. Rosenberg, seconded by Mr. Clapper, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DRAFT 2025-070** AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 4, 2025, WHICH WILL AMEND ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 8.07 TITLED “CHARTER REVIEW” AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**Draft 2025-070 passes.**

***Community Development Committee – Chair Rosenberg/Vice-Chair Clapper***

No action.

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

No action.

***Land Use Committee – Chair Shaffer-Bish/Vice-Chair Hook***

No action.

***Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee – Chair Sidoti/Vice-Chair Clapper***

No action.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Amrhein made a motion to create a subcommittee to examine the Charter Review recommendations that Council identified as needing more work, seconded by Mr. Clapper. After discussion, Mr. Amrhein amended the motion to review the items under the Committee of the Whole rather than a separate subcommittee. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

- Council members continued discussion of non-partisan elections within the City of Kent, with members offering different opinions and rationales for their positions. Mr. Turner, Ms. Shaffer Bish and Mr. Hook chiefly supported partisan elections; Mr. Sidoti expressed his support for having the voters decide what type of elections the City should have.
- Ms. Celko encouraged council members to attend the Longest Table event.
- Ms. Rosenberg congratulated Main Street Kent and the Chamber of Commerce on the success of Heritage Fest and reminded Council of the Wizardly World events scheduled for the upcoming weekend.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Fiala stated that he supports non-partisan elections. He also thanked Mr. Amrhein and Ms. Coleman for their work in getting the Mayors' plaque completed.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

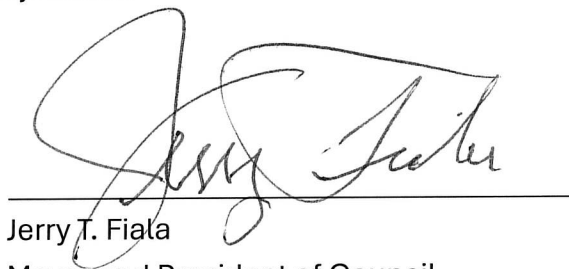
At 8:20, Mr. Amrhein made a motion to move into executive session to discuss the City Manager's evaluation, seconded by Mr. Hook.

**RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION AND ADJOURN**

At 8:44, Council returned to regular session and adjourned.



Kathleen Coleman  
Clerk of Council



Jerry T. Fiala  
Mayor and President of Council