



City of Kent

Regular City Council Meeting

319 S. Water Street, Kent, Ohio 44240

September 17, 2025

MINUTES

At 7:00pm, President Pro Tem Jack Amrhein 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. Heidi Shaffer Bish; Mr. Roger Sidoti; Mr. Robin Turner

Also Present: Ms. Kathy Coleman, Clerk of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Melanie Baker, Services Director; Ms. Bridget Susel; Community Development Director; Police Chief Nick Shearer, Fire Chief Jamie Samels

OPENING REMARKS AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Clapper offered opening remarks recognizing Constitution Day and led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMUNICATIONS

Public Comment:

- Ms. Melanie Neff of Hudson Road addressed Council and advocated for increased low-income homeownership options, expressing concern about an overemphasis on rentals and potential luxury developments on Franklin. She cited interest in alternatives like Habitat for Humanity models and encouraged collaboration with developers to support working poor and retirees seeking smaller, walkable, ownership housing.
- Mr. Doug Fuller of River Edge Dr. urged council to invite the Architectural Review Board members to present their work, noting they have volunteered for a number of years without being given time to speak at this level. He objected to the motion to dissolve the ARB as "redundant," arguing that such logic would also eliminate other bodies like the planning commission and zoning board. He requested an open forum to allow the ARB to demonstrate its contributions and recommendations.

Written Communication:

- On August 27, 2025 a draft resolution was received from Rick Hawksley, regarding the deployment of Ohio National Guard troops to Washington DC and other cities. The draft was shared with Council.
- On August 29, 2025, a letter was received from Jake Shields, Director of Acquisitions with Grey Fox Capital, regarding the development of the property on the old Davey Drill site. The letter was sent to Council, as well as other community members.
- On September 2, 2025 the August minutes and September agenda for the Standing Rock Cemetery Board were received and posted online.
- On September 8, 2025, another letter was received from Jake Shields with Grey Fox Capital, following up with discussion at the September 3, 2025 Council Committee meeting, and expressing commitment to the project. The letter was sent to Council, as well as other community members.
- On September 9, 2025, Mr. Sidoti shared a proposal from the Kent Rotary Club to initiate and manage a "Parade of Flags" program to foster community pride and patriotism while raising funds for local projects. The program would be a subscription-based service managed by volunteers, with flags displayed on five major national holidays. The Rotary Club requests permission to operate the program within the city limits, ensuring it adheres to local ordinances and safety standards.
- On September 11, 2025, the revised agenda for the September Board of Zoning Appeals meeting was received and posted in the foyer of City Hall
- On September 11, 2025, the September agenda for the Parks and Recreation Board meeting was received and posted in the foyer of City Hall
- On September 11, 2025, the Clerk's office received notice that the Planning Commission would not be meeting on September 16, due to a lack of agenda items

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

MOTION TO APPROVE ITEMS 1-2 OF THE CITY MANAGER'S REPORT was made by Mr. Amrhein, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION TO SUSPEND THREE READINGS OF DRAFTS 2025-084 THROUGH 2025-093 was made by Ms. Shaffer Bish, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

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

- **DRAFT 2025-084** 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.

- **DRAFT 2025-085** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN APPEAL TO GRANT A VARIANCE TO ZONING CODE SECTION 1106.20 PUBLIC ART, SPECIFICALLY SECTION 1106.20(A)(3)(c) TO ALLOW FOR A MURAL TO BE DISPLAYED ON THE FRONT FAÇADE OF THE BUILDING THAT ABUTS SOUTH DEPEYSTER STREET AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-086** AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING A DONATION OF THREE (3) PARCELS OF LAND TOTALING (36.548 ACRES) FROM STREAM & WETLANDS FOUNDATION, LOCATED SOUTH OF FAIRCHILD AVENUE AND WEST OF MAJORS LANE ALONG FISH CREEK AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-087** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE DOWNTOWN KENT DORA TO EXPAND THE BOUNDARIES TO INCLUDE THREE NEW BUSINESSES, THE BLIND SQUIRREL PUB, RIVER MERCHANT AND BOTTLES 101, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-088** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2024-131, THE CURRENT APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE, PASSED DECEMBER 18, 2024; 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, 2025; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-089** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE WATER TAP-IN FOR PETROS DEVELOPMENT GROUP FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2567 STATE ROUTE 43, OUTSIDE THE CITY OF KENT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-090** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER, OR HIS DESIGNEE, TO APPROVE THE CONSENT LEGISLATION FOR THE STATE OF OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT), PROJECT POR SR0261 03.51 (PID 105237) FOR RESURFACING A PORTION OF SR261 THAT IS LOCATED WITHIN CITY LIMITS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY
- **DRAFT 2025-091** A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE OFFICIAL INTENT AND REASONABLE EXPECTATION OF THE CITY OF KENT ON BEHALF OF THE STATE OF OHIO (THE BORROWER) TO REIMBURSE ITS 301 CAPITAL FUND FOR THE CG48AC / CG49AC, SUNRISE BOULEVARD REHABILITATION WITH THE PROCEEDS OF TAX EXEMPT DEBT OF THE STATE OF OHIO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-092** AN ORDINANCE RENEWING AND AMENDING THE KENT-FRANKLIN JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (JEDD) INCOME TAX AGREEMENT TO ALLOW FOR THE OPTION TO TRANSITION THE COLLECTION OF INCOME TAXES FOR THE JEDD TO THE REGIONAL INCOME TAX AGENCY (RITA) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2025-093** A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A DONATION OF FRAMED ARTWORK FROM CASS MCKAY WALKER TO THE CITY OF KENT, IN RECOGNITION OF HER APPRECIATION FOR THE CITY AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Consent agenda passes.

STANDING COMMITTEES AND LEGISLATION

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

No action.

Community Development Committee – Chair Rosenberg/Vice-Chair Clappe

No action.

Finance Committee – Chair DeLeone/Vice-Chair Celko

- MOTION to AUTHORIZE INSERTION OF NAMES into DRAFT 2025-094 was made by Ms. Rosenberg, seconded by Mr. Sidoti, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- MOTION TO SUSPEND THREE READINGS OF DRAFT 2025-094 was made by Mr. Sidoti, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, and carried by unanimous roll call vote, 9-0-0.
- MOTION to ADOPT DRAFT 2025-094 was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Mr. Hook, and carried by unanimous roll call vote, 9-0-0.

DRAFT 2025-094 A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR

Draft 2025-094 passes.

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

- Mr. Sidoti requested an update on the issue of the noise ordinance, in regards to dog-barking, which was brought up by a resident at a previous meeting. Ms. Jones reported that she looked into the ordinance and found that there did not seem to be an issue with Kent's code; it is very similar to ordinances in other comparable municipalities.
- Ms. Celko moved to have the deadline (October) removed from the vote on Flock cameras to allow more time for discussion. Mr. Clapper seconded the motion, and after discussion, the motion passed by a hand vote of 5-3-1.

NEW BUSINESS

- Mr. Clapper moved to change the start time of Council Committee meetings to 6:00pm, citing the recent struggles to complete all agenda items prior to 10:00pm. The motion

was seconded by Mr. DeLeone. After discussion, the motion was defeated in voice vote, 1-8-0.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- Ms. Shaffer Bish suggested Council look at the issue of late night noise in the "edge" communities bordering downtown, specifically live music. It was noted that the issue is currently on the Pending List, so no motion was necessary.
- Mr. Turner moved to put the issue of chronic abuse of parking regulations into committee, citing repeated instances of individuals choosing to pay the parking fine rather than obey the restrictions. The motion was seconded by Mr. Deleone, and passed by voice vote, 7-2-0.
- Mr. Hook brought up the subject of new council member orientation and stated he would like to lead a process to look at strategic planning with the new members. Mr. Ruller was amenable to the idea of further discussions on the topic.

MAYOR'S REPORT

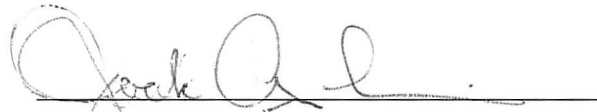
No report.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04pm.



Kathleen Coleman
Clerk of Council



Jack Amrhein
President Pro Tem of Council

