



City of Kent

Regular City Council Meeting

319 S. Water Street, Kent, Ohio 44240

April 15, 2026

MINUTES

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

Present: Ms. Melissa Celko; Mr. Jeff Clapper; Mr. Eric Dreger; Mr. Chris Hook; Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish; Mr. Benjamin Tipton; Ms. Sarah Wesley

Also Present: Mr. Jack Amrhein, Mayor and President of Council; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Services Director; Ms. Bridget Susel, Community Development Director; Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Dominique Bollenbacher, Community Outreach Coordinator; Cpt. Nick Shearer, Acting Police Chief; Jordan Snyder, IT Technician

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

OPENING REMARKS and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Celko led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMUNICATIONS

Public Comment

- **Ms. Tatum Wertz** addressed Council, expressing frustration over ongoing construction on Main Street, which has significantly increased travel times. She compared the local traffic situation to that in Cleveland, believing that local Kent traffic is currently worse, hindering progress rather than improving it.

Written Communication

- On March 13, 2026, an email was received from Geoffrey Westerfield of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources advising of a workshop dealing with urban deer management. The email was shared with Council.
- On March 31, 2026, the April agenda and staff report for the April 7, 2026 Planning Commission meeting were received.

- On March 31, 2026, the March minutes and April agenda for the Standing Rock Cemetery trustees' meetings were received. The agenda was later amended and re-posted.

City Manager's Report

MOTION TO APPROVE THE CITY MANAGER'S REPORT was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Mr. Hook, and passed by unanimous voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION TO SUSPEND THREE READINGS OF DRAFTS 2026-29 through 2026-37 was made by Ms. Shaffer Bish, seconded by Mr. Clapper, and carried by unanimous roll call vote, 7-0-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Mr. Hook, and carried by unanimous roll call vote, 7-0-0.

- Approval of March Regular Council Meeting minutes
- Approval of April Council Committee Meeting minutes
- **DRAFT 2026-29** 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 2026-30** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2025-111, THE CURRENT APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE, PASSED DECEMBER 17, 2025; 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, 2026; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2026-31** AN ORDINANCE IMPOSING A TEMPORARY MORATORIUM, NOT TO EXCEED ONE YEAR, ON THE GRANTING/ISSUING ANY PERMITS FOR AI DATA CENTERS WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF KENT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2026-32** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE KENT FIRE DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR A JOEY D. FOUNDATION GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,000 AND TO ACCEPT GRANT, IF AWARDED, WITH CORRESPONDING APPROPRIATIONS OF FUNDS WHICH WILL PROVIDE FUNDING TO PURCHASE "PERSONAL BAILOUT" EQUIPMENT TO PROTECT FIRE SAFETY PERSONNEL AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

- **DRAFT 2026-33** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF KENT SERVICE DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$500,000 FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) FOR A TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (TID) GRANT FOR THE NORTH MANTUA STREET PROJECT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2026-34** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW HOUSING ACQUISITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO PROMOTE HOMEOWNERSHIP AND FACILITATE THE CONVERSION OF SINGLE-FAMILY RENTAL PROPERTIES INTO OWNER-OCCUPIED PROPERTIES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2026-35** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA (CRA) AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO, KMPH REAL ESTATE, LLC AND MC AUTOMOTIVE, INC. (DBA MONTROSE MAZDA) DATED AUGUST 27, 2020 TO REMOVE THE ANNUAL FEE REQUIREMENT IN SECTION 5 OF THE AGREEMENT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2026-36** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER OR HIS DESIGNEE TO ACCEPT THE UPDATED PORTAGE COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN (HMP) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
- **DRAFT 2026-37** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF KENT OHIO TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND / OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED.

STANDING COMMITTEES AND LEGISLATION

Committee of the Whole – Chair Amrhein

No action.

Community Development Committee – Chair Shaffer Bish/Vice-Chair Wallach

No action.

Finance Committee – Chair DeLeone/Vice-Chair Celko

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

None.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- Ms. Shaffer Bish expressed appreciation to Ms. Baker and the staff at the water plants for providing guidance and information to a group of community members who toured the facilities on April 11, 2026.
- Mr. Tipton explained the voting process to students in attendance.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Amrhein offered Ms. Seidel congratulation on her upcoming retirement on April 24, 2026, and thanked her for her years of excellent service.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Clapper moved, and Ms. Celko seconded, to go into executive session to discuss the employment dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

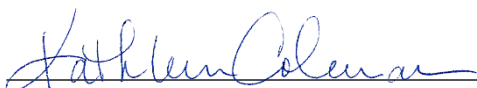
RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

Voting on Board/Commission Appointment

- Motion to appoint Julie Kenworthy to the Committee on Design and Preservation was made by Ms. Wesley, seconded by Ms. Celko and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to authorize insertion of name into Draft 2026-38 was made by Ms. Celko, seconded by Mr. Clapper, and carried by unanimous voice vote.
- Motion to suspend three readings of Draft 2026-38 was made by Ms. Shaffer Bish, seconded by Ms. Celko and carried by unanimous roll call vote.
- Motion to authorize **DRAFT 2026-38 AN ORDINANCE APPOINTING JULIE KENWORTHY TO THE COMMITTEE ON DESIGN AND PRESERVATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY** was made by Ms. Shaffer Bish, seconded by Mr. Clapper, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:19pm.



Kathleen Coleman
Clerk of Council

Jack Amrhein
Mayor and President of Council