

CUYAHOGA FALLS CITY COUNCIL
Minutes of the Council Meeting

January 27, 2025

Call to Order: Mr. Balthis at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Mr. Ashton, present; Mr. Balthis, present; Mr. Brillhart, present; Mr. DeRemer, present; Mr. James, present; Ms. Loza, present; Ms. Nichols-Rhodes, present; Mrs. Penta, present; Mr. Siegfert, present; Mrs. Spinner, present; Mr. Stams, present.

Invocation: Mrs. Spinner

Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Siegfert

Approval of Minutes: None

Reports and Communications: A Notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control regarding Transfer Permit Number 87741900005 to TS Dining Group LLC, Ste G & Patio, 1846 Front Street, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, 44221, from Shale Group LLC, dba Craft Beer Bar, Ste G & Patio, 1846 Front Street, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, 44221.

New Legislation
(First Reading)

Temp. Ord. B-9 (Planning & Zoning)

An ordinance accepting the Planning Commission's recommendation for the approval of a conditional zoning certificate for an outdoor sales lot at 41 Steels Corners Road for Falls Investment Properties LLC (Valley Motors), and declaring an emergency.

Temp. Ord. B-10 (Planning & Zoning)

An ordinance approving a zoning map amendment for parcels located on Wyoga Lake Road north of Falls Commerce Parkway from MU-1 Rural Neighborhood Center to E-1 Employment District, and declaring an emergency.

Temp. Ord. B-11 (Finance)

An ordinance appropriating Community Development Block Grant Carryover Funds for calendar year 2025, and declaring an emergency.

Temp. Ord. B-12 (Public Improvements)

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the annual resurfacing and/or repair of various streets as described in Exhibit 'A' attached hereto, in the City of Cuyahoga Falls and authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts for pavement preservation on various streets within the city, and declaring an emergency.

Temp. Ord. B-13 (Public Affairs)

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a NOPEC Energized Community Grant Agreement with Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council, Inc. for energy efficiency or energy infrastructure projects, and declaring an emergency.

Reports of Council's Standing Committees

(Third Reading)

Planning & Zoning:

No Report.

Finance & Appropriations:

Temp. Ord. B-1

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor, as Director of Public Safety, to enter into a contract or contracts, without competitive bidding, with Flock Group, Inc. for the use and maintenance of Flock Cameras for use by the city's safety forces, and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes moved to adopt Temp. Ord. B-1, second by Mr. Brillhart. Motion passed, voice vote (11-0).

Public Improvements:

Temp. Ord. B-2

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, with Osborn Engineering for professional engineering services for the resurfacing of Bailey Road from Front Street to Graham Road, and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Penta moved to adopt Temp. Ord. B-2, second by Mr. Stams. Motion passed, voice vote (11-0).

Temp. Ord. B-3

An ordinance authorizing the director of public service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, with GAI Consultants for professional engineering services for the resurfacing of Munroe Falls Avenue, from Bailey Road to the last corporation limits, and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Penta moved to adopt Temp. Ord. B-3, second by Mr. Stams. Motion passed, voice vote (11-0).

Public Affairs:

Temp. Ord. B-4

An ordinance amending the Traffic Control File, and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Loza moved to adopt Temp. Ord. B-4, second by Mr. Ashton. Motion passed, voice vote (11-0).

Temp. Ord. B-5

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract or contracts with the Ohio Attorney General Collection Enforcement section for purposes of providing delinquent collection services for the Cuyahoga Falls Mayor’s Court, and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Loza moved to adopt Temp. Ord. B-5, second by Mr. Ashton. Motion passed, voice vote (11-0).

Community Development:

Temp. Ord. B-6 (Sub. Dated 1/16/25)

An ordinance amending Chapter 561.01 Nuisances, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Siegferth moved to adopt Temp. Ord. B-6 (Sub. Dated 1/16/25), second by Mr. Ashton. Motion passed, voice vote (11-0).

Temp. Ord. B-7

An ordinance implementing Sections 3735.65 through 3735.70 of the Ohio Revised Code, establishing and describing the boundaries of the Merriman Valley Schumacher Community Reinvestment Area in the City of Cuyahoga Falls, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Siegferth moved to adopt Temp. Ord. B-7, second by Mr. Ashton. Motion passed, voice vote (11-0).

Schedule of Committee Meetings

Planning & Zoning:	February 3, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. Public Hearing
Finance:	February 3, 2025, at 6:35 p.m.
Public Improvements:	February 3, 2025, at 6:40 p.m.
Public Affairs:	February 3, 2025, at 6:45 p.m.
Community Development:	February 3, 2025, at 6:50 p.m.

Miscellaneous Business

Deputy Fire Chief Kee presented an update on the progress of the Firefighter Memorial Project. They are about 16 to 17 months into the construction. They have encountered some unanticipated delays with skyrocketing costs and issues with contractors. The masonry was the biggest component undertaken last year and was finished up late in spring, early summer. The refurbished bell was reinstalled in the Memorial Tower in May. Following that, the roof, gutter and downspouts were installed and interior grading was completed. When the weather breaks, they will do concrete curbing, the pavers that are going to go in the ground and then the landscaping that ties it together. They are in the process of designing the signage and plantings and getting those on order. Once those are ordered and ready to install, they will have a better idea of when to move forward with the dedication ceremony. He thanked everybody on Council, City Administration and Mayor Walters. Every step of the way, whenever they needed something, they have been there to help them.

Mr. Balthis stated that he appreciates Chief Kee coming in and giving an update and, more importantly, appreciate him and all the other volunteers for spending so much time on this project. He is happy to support in any way he can.

Mrs. Spinner stated that the Memorial looks great. The exterior refurbishing of Station One ties it all together and it looks really nice. Chief Kee stated that they are excited about the work being done on Front Street. With the Memorial project and Station One remodel, they fit together perfectly with the continuous improvements coming to South Front Street, and they are excited to be a part of it.

Deputy Chief Kee thanked Mr. Brillhart for being a part of their Executive Board for the past year. He has been a tremendous asset to them. He has helped out with buying antique fire trucks. Mr. Brillhart has paid every bit of it out of pocket for those trucks. They are looking forward to having those trucks restored and part of their fire department history and tied to the memorial. Mr. Brillhart stated that it has been his pleasure.

Ms. Diana Colavecchio, Community Development Director present the quarterly and year-end Economic Development Report. On the back of the page handed to Council, under the second column, “2024 Completed Totals,” they essentially realized the benefit of 264 new jobs in the city resulting in \$72,498,000 worth of new investment. The blue lines on the sheet represent projects that have been proposed for some time and completed. Akron Children's Hospital has broken ground on their new medical center on Portage Trail. Akron Polymer Systems has moved into their new location on Wyoga Lake Road. Black Dog Baking is under renovation on their new home on Graham Road. Burger King on Howe Avenue is currently under renovation. Care For Kids has relocated from the old BMV building on Graham Road to their new home on Graham Road Circle. The Sheetz that is slated to go in on Graham Road at the BMV spot is still on target to happen. Emideo's is making plans to absorb the BMV and renovate that facility to keep those

jobs. On Cochran Road, they built the new electric building, but also Michael Horning Design and Construction built his own building and has a tenant called Turnouts LLC that does firefighter gear. No Filter moved into the backside of Front Street. Ohio Kids Dental has submitted plans to renovate the old Family Video on the corner of Bailey Road. The former Ponderosa has submitted plans for the exterior and interior. 7 Brew has opened on Howe Avenue. Spirol, one of the industrial companies on Remington Road, is in the process of putting on a small addition. The Glens Town Home Project on South Front Street has begun. The owners of Burntwood Tavern and Leo's Social have bought Ohio Brewery and will reopen that as a restaurant soon.

Ms. Colavecchio stated that Community Development operates the CIC, Community Improvement Corporation, into which ARPA dollars were deposited. Last year, they gave two revolving loans in that program. Also, Cuyahoga Falls is now home to an amateur football team, the Cuyahoga Falls Rapids. Lastly, the Community Development Department is hosting a Planning Commission meeting on February 4th, at 6 p.m., to present the consultant's report of the possible redesign and new streetscape along both the South State Road corridor and the Bailey/Northmoreland corridor.

Mr. Bryan Hoffman, Finance Director, presented Report 21 to Council. In 2024, just about every fund outperformed some early projections. In the General Fund, they ended the year with just over \$25.5 million in unencumbered balance, which is the highest ever had in the city. They have done that with a mix of revenues that have come in strong over the year between property taxes, income taxes and others. On the income tax side, they did end the year with income taxes up 5.1 percent over 2023. In 2025, they are still continuing to see strong income tax returns for the City. In the Street Construction Maintenance and Repair Fund, they ended with an unencumbered balance of \$1.866 million. That is the fund that is used to pay for road salt, so they try to keep a decent balance in there in case there is a winter similar to this year, so they are in the strong position to endure the additional cost of salt. On page 9 of the report, the Local Fiscal Recovery Fund referred to ARPA dollars. They had a deadline, in 2024, to encumber all the funds needed for full spending of those dollars and they did. They have until 2026 to spend them, and they are still on pace to make sure they get all those dollars out the door.

Mr. Hoffman stated that, in 2024, revenues for the Natatorium were up 6.1 percent, Waterworks were up 8.4 percent, Brookledge was up 4.6 percent and Downview was up 2.3 percent over 2023 numbers. In the Self-Insurance Fund, it was projected that they would end that fund close to an even balance and they did. Out of a fund that they spent over \$8.3 million in 2024, they did have increases to hospitalization and prescription costs throughout the year, but with the premiums they were able to collect over the year, they only decreased that fund balance by around \$20,000 out of the \$5.4 million fund balance. They were able to match revenues and expenses in that fund and hopefully the projections for 2025 are solid and they will continue to see performance out of that fund. Through the Health Care Committee, they are looking for ways to control costs on all levels and they have had some positive discussions on that.

Mr. James moved to adjourn, second by Mr. Brillhart. Motion passed, voice vote (11-0).

Meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Russ Balthis, Council President

Dana M. Capriulo, Clerk of Council