London City Council

20 S. Walnut Street, London, Ohio 43140

December 19, 2024 at 6:30pm

Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Council President Peters at 6:30p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited with a moment of Silent Reflection.

Roll Call

Present – *President Peters, Councilman Eades, Councilman Hays, Councilman McDaniels, Councilman Hitt, Councilman Stahl, Councilman Norman, Councilwoman Treynor*

Minutes – Approval of December 5, 2024 minutes, approved by unanimous vote

Public Hearing

Motion to enter into public hearing by Councilman Norman, 2nd Councilman Hays. The motion carried by the following vote:

Absent:	**0-**	
Affirmative:	**7-**	**Hitt, Hays, Stahl, Eades, McDaniels, Norman, Treynor**
Against:	**0-**	

RESOLUTION 196-24 Sponsored by Shannon Treynor A RESOLUTION adopting the recommendations of the Planning Commission. London Landing at Brooksedge Phase IV

Motion to exit public hearing by Councilman Norman, 2nd Councilman Hays. The motion carried by the following vote:

Absent:	**0-**	
Affirmative:	**7-**	**Hitt, Hays, Stahl, Eades, McDaniels, Norman, Treynor**
Against:	**0-**	

Communications/Announcements – none

Audience Concerns - none

Committee Reports – *(Department reports are attached to committee meeting minutes.)*

Councilman Eades: Personnel and Finance committee met on Monday, December 16. The auditor's report was given, and the Civic Plus program will be introduced in January with a discount due to multiple programs. Discussions included the upcoming cruiser and additions to budget legislation, including funds for professional services to vet TIF and NCA.

Councilman McDaniels: The public service and safety committee met, where he provided reports on parks and recreation as well as the fire/EMS department.

Councilman Hays: At the public safety service meeting on December 10, multiple city employees were present, and the minutes were approved. Mr. Castle proposed legislation for a street name change and received a quote for pedestrian crosswalk lights at Park and Main, and 5th and Main. Due to the width of Main Street, the lights might have little effect, costing $50K for both. He also discussed speeding issues with the police and ongoing efforts to address them, as well as police dispatching with preliminary figures comparing city and county services. The next meeting is on January 14, 2025, at 6 PM.

Councilman Hitt: Attended the personnel and budget meeting, discussing the fire chief's need for a new truck and a grade system for sidewalks. Outside counsel will review TIF and NCA regarding development areas. The next meeting is on January 21 at 5:30 PM. He also attended the public service meeting, where they discussed standardization criteria for events, including boundaries, hours, and the number of events per year. The street department's assistance with sanitation due to short staffing and the possibility of a new trash truck next August were also discussed. Mr. Long mentioned the need for a new pull barn to store equipment. The next public service meeting is on January 14 at 5:30 PM.

Councilwoman Treynor: Attended the finance meeting, and she had nothing additional to add.

Councilman Stahl: Provided the police report.

Councilman Norman: Attended the public service meeting and gave the street report.

City Official Reports

Mayor Closser report attached

Mr. Norman: Asked about the possibility of receiving regular reports from Mid Ohio Sewer, similar to the updates previously provided by BPU.

Mayor Closser mentioned that either himself or M. Castle attend every meeting. Currently, they are working on tap fees, which Mid Ohio Sewer wants to increase significantly. The mayor is advocating for a staggered increase and mentioned that a third party is being brought in to estimate appropriate tap fees. This increase would affect developers rather than current citizens. The mayor also discussed ongoing efforts on the east side sewer project, noting that only one bid was received, so they plan to reopen the bidding process.

Mr. McDaniels: Inquired about the experience and knowledge of Mid Ohio Sewer regarding appropriate tap fees.

Mayor: Responded that Mid Ohio Sewer is aware of the appropriate tap fees but City of London has suggested a gradual increase to avoid sudden financial burdens on developers. He provided an example involving Arbor Homes, which would face a significant increase in tap fees.

Mr. Castle: Updated on the bond offering process, which is expected to be completed by February. He mentioned a title search required by the USDA revealed a lien from 2011 related to work done by a contractor for the school district. Efforts are underway to remove this lien.

Mr. Eades: Questioned the status of an engineer report related to a previously passed measure (206-24)

Mr. Castle stated that it has been sent to the engineer and is expected back by the end of the year.

Old Business

4th Reading

RESOLUTION 196-24 Sponsored by Shannon Treynor A RESOLUTION adopting the recommendations of the Planning Commission. London Landing at Brooksedge Phase IV

Motion to adopt RESOLUTION by Councilman Stahl, 2nd Councilman Norman. The motion carried by the following vote:

Absent:	**0-**	
Affirmative:	**7-**	**Hitt, Hays, Stahl, Eades, McDaniels, Norman, Treynor**
Against:	**0-**	

3rd Reading

ORDINANCE 198-24 Sponsored by: Greg Eades An ORDINANCE to make appropriations for current expenses and other expenditures of the City of London, State of Ohio, during the fiscal year ending December 31, 2025

Mr. Eades: Stated that adjustments were made at the last meeting and sought clarification on whether $100K was removed from the street department budget. Mr. McDaniels confirmed its removal. They discussed the possibility of amending the budget to add the $100K back in. Mr. Eades also discussed seeking outside counsel, mentioning that Mr. Castle suggested putting $100K in the account, which seemed excessive. They agreed that any extra money would return to the general fund.

Mr. Castle: discussed estimates for the cost of the service, indicating that while he gave a higher number to avoid underestimation, the actual cost should hopefully be around $50-60K

Mr. Eades moved then to amend the ordinance to add 100K back into street department budget for 2025 for the Salt Barn. He also moved to add 100K into council budget for 2025

Motion to amend ORDINANCE by Councilman Eades, 2nd Councilman Norman. The motion carried by the following vote:

Absent:	**0-**	
Affirmative:	**7-**	**Hitt, Hays, Stahl, Eades, McDaniels, Norman, Treynor**
Against:	**0-**	

Mr. Norman: Raised concerns about the city's finances, noting that the average yearly revenue is $1.3 million while expenses are $1.4 million. He pointed out that the bank account balance at the end of October was $14.8 million, far exceeding the 90-day reserve of $4.3 million. He questioned whether the city is overbudgeting, leading to excess funds that get reappropriated at the end of the year. He suggested that the city might be holding too much in reserve, which could be used for other projects.

Mr. Castle: Explained that the $10 million excess is spread across various funds with specific legislative restrictions on their use. He clarified that only $2-3 million is in the general fund, which the city can control. Other funds are designated for specific purposes

and cannot be transferred to the general fund. He mentioned that Kenna has been exploring ways to utilize these funds. He also noted that investing the excess funds could generate some interest, but pushing the state too much could result in state intervention.

Mr. Castle: Shared that he had similar questions in the past and reiterated the complexities of transferring funds from designated accounts.

Mr. McDaniels: Asked if there was anything that could be done with the overbudgeted funds.

Mayor: Clarified that certain funds, like the trash enterprise fund and the fire department budget, are separate. He suggested that anyone with questions should speak to Kenna for detailed explanations, emphasizing the importance of the general fund.

Mr. McDaniels: Suggested that interest earned from the excess funds could be used to give back some income tax to those who work out of town.

Mayor: Assured that the city is not hoarding cash and reiterated the explanations provided.

Motion to adopt ORDINANCE by Councilman Eades, 2nd Councilman Norman. The motion carried by the following vote:

Absent:	**0-**	
Affirmative:	**7-**	**Hitt, Hays, Stahl, Eades, McDaniels, Norman, Treynor**
Against:	**0-**	

2nd Reading

ORDINANCE 207-24 Sponsored by: Shannon Treynor, Andrew Hitt and Greg Eades An ORDINANCE creating nineteen incentive districts and declaring improvements to certain real property within the incentive districts to be a public purpose, and exempt from Real Property taxation; Identifying certain public infrastructure improvements that, once made, will benefit or serve the parcels in the incentive districts; Requiring the owners of those parcels to make service payments in lieu of taxes; establishing an incentive district public improvement tax increment equivalent fund for the deposit of such service payments; Authorizing payments to the London City School District and Tolles Career and Technical Centers; and approving and authorizing the execution and delivery of a tax increment financing agreement with Tom Cat, LLC.

Public Hearing scheduled for January 16, 2025 during the regular Council meeting
Ms. Treynor Explained the process of three ordinances that are essential for the development of a TIF. The first ordinance involves the declaration of 19 identified tax districts and the public purpose for tax incentives and public improvement purposes, allowing for service payments in lieu of taxes. The following ordinances pertain to a commercial TIF and then an NCA. These are complex pieces of legislation. After the public hearing and council review, Ms. Treynor believes these ordinances could be beneficial for future development, particularly for residential housing, as they would allow developers to share the infrastructure costs for various neighborhoods. Developers have been working on this for some time, and a public hearing is scheduled for January 16. There has been significant discussion about having an independent attorney review the ordinances to ensure legal compliance and viability, and to identify any potential pitfalls. Ms. Treynor suggested leaving these ordinances on for a third reading and will look into law firms for this review.

ORDINANCE 208-24 Sponsored by: Shannon Treynor, Andrew Hitt and Greg Eades An ORDINANCE authorizing the City of London, Ohio to accept title to certain real property located within the city and immediately transfer title back to the current owner for the purpose of implementing tax increment financing pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code Section 5709.41; and Dispensing with the requirement that this resolution must be read on three different days pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 731.17(A)

Ms. Treynor stated that there are preliminary requirements for development to follow for TIF/NCA. This ordinance is part of ORC in order to qualify, property must have been owned by the city. This will transfer to city then back to developer to satisfy the requirement

ORDINANCE 209-24 Sponsored by: Shannon Treynor, Andrew Hitt and Greg Eades An ORDINANCE declaring the improvement of certain real property located in the City of London, Madison County, Ohio to be a public purpose pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 5709.41; Declaring such property to be exempt Real Property taxation; Designating improvements that, once made, will directly benefit the parcels for which improvement is declared to be a public purpose; Requiring annual service payments in lieu of taxes; Establishing an urban redevelopment tax increment equivalent fund; authorizing the execution of a tax increment financing TIF agreement; and providing related authorizations pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Sections 5709.41, 5709.42, 5709.43, 5709.832 and 5709.85

Ms. Treynor stated that this is the heart of the matter for service payments of the TIF. This would require service payments in lieu of real property taxes. She believes this TIF, as proposed, would have no detrimental impact on the school district.

RESOLUTION 210-24 Sponsored by: Shannon Treynor, Andrew Hitt and Greg Eades A RESOLUTION determining that a petition to establish The London Gateway New Community Authority is sufficient and complies with the requirements of Section 349.03 of the Ohio Revised Code in form and substance; setting the time and place for a hearing on the petition and authorizing the notice by publication of such hearing.

Public Hearing scheduled for January 16, 2025 during the regular Council meeting

New Business

RESOLUTION 211-24 Sponsored by: Andrew Hitt A RESOLUTION increasing appropriations. The Police Department would like to purchase a new cruiser.

Mr. Hitt stated this is for the purchase of a new cruiser for $72K, with an emergency clause. The chief has already chosen the vehicle.

Mr. McDaniels: Questioned why the cost is so high.

Ms. Treynor explained that $20K is for outfitting the vehicle, and the vehicle itself is a good deal.

Mr. Castle: Added that outfitting costs range from $17-20K. The chief found a 2024 model in stock, which is cheaper than a 2025 model. Purchasing it now would save money.

Mr. Norman: Noted that acquiring the vehicle now is advantageous due to long wait times for such purchases.

Mr. Eades: Clarified that purchasing the cruiser now simply moves up the timeline, as it would have been bought in 2025 as part of the normal rotation for new cruisers.

Motion to suspend the 3-reading rule by Councilman Norman, 2nd Councilman Hitt. The motion carried by the following vote:

Absent:	**0-**	
Affirmative:	**6-**	**Norman, Stahl, Eades, Hays, Hitt, Treynor**
Against:	**1-**	**McDaniels**

Motion to adopt RESOLUTION by Councilman Norman, 2nd Councilman Stahl. The motion carried by the following vote:

Absent:	**0-**	
Affirmative:	**6-**	**Hitt, Hays, Stahl, Eades, Norman, Treynor**
Against:	**1-**	**McDaniels**

ORDINANCE 212-24 Sponsored by: Michael Norman An ORDINANCE amending Section 660 of the Codified Ordinances

Mr. Norman: Expressed hope that this initiative would lead to new sidewalks in the community. He inquired about zoning guidelines that define what constitutes a "bad" sidewalk, noting the difficulty in enforcement. After researching various communities, he combined their standards into Section 660, which outlines homeowners' responsibility for maintaining safe sidewalks and provides a definition of acceptable sidewalk conditions. He hopes this will be the beginning of a path to fixing sidewalks. Without clear zoning and administrative enforcement, the issue remains unresolved. This new information aims to equip zoning officials with the necessary guidelines to enforce sidewalk maintenance and repairs.

Mr. Eades made a comment to Mr. Gross about increasing walkability of City of London by adding this to the ordinance

ORDINANCE 213-24 Sponsored by: Andrew Hitt An ORDINANCE naming Jenkinson Avenue

Mr. Hitt: Proposed legislation to officially name the rename to Jenkinson Avenue.

Mr. Castle: Explained that the issue was brought to their attention by 911 during a database update. The database listed the street as Jenkinson Drive, but there was a need for consistency. In 1968, the council changed the name to Jenkinson Drive, but residents preferred Jenkinson Avenue, which is what the street sign, residents, and postal service use. However, utility services and 911 refer to it as Jenkinson Drive. The goal is to have a consistent name for the street.

Motion to suspend the 3-reading rule by Councilman Hays, 2nd Councilman Hitt. The motion carried by the following vote:

Absent:	**0-**	
Affirmative:	**7-**	**Norman, Stahl, Eades, Hays, Hitt, Treynor, McDaniels**
Against:	**0-**	

Motion to adopt RESOLUTION by Councilman Hitt, 2nd Councilman Stahl. The motion carried by the following vote:

Absent: **0-**
Affirmative: **7-** **Hitt, Hays, Stahl, Eades, Norman, Treynor, McDaniels**
Against: **0-**

Round Table

Councilman Norman: Reflected on the year's progress, highlighting the new police station, developments, and the new TIF and NCA. He praised the collaborative efforts of the council and administration, expressing gratitude for community support. He wished everyone a happy holiday and reminded them to be careful on the roads, looking forward to seeing everyone on January 2.

Councilman Stahl: Emphasized the city's growth and progress, mentioning Aldi's ongoing work. He wished everyone and their families a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Councilwoman Treynor: As a new council member, she found the year exciting with many new developments in the community. She expressed gratitude for being part of the council and wished everyone happy holidays.

Councilman Hitt: Thanked everyone for their interest and participation. He thanked Mr. Gross and associates for their information on TIF and NCA. He reminded everyone of the upcoming service meeting on January 14 at 5 PM and the finance meeting on January 21 at 5 PM.

Councilman Hays: Thanked city employees for their hard work over the past year, especially those working during the holidays. He appreciated the efforts of fellow council members and Mr. Gross's input. He noted the city's growing population and positive momentum, wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous and safe New Year.

Councilman McDaniels: Thanked everyone for attending and listening, noting it was an interesting and educational year. He wished everyone happy holidays.

Councilman Eades: Thanked city employees and council members for a good year and productive discussions. He also thanked Councilman McDaniels and his wife for their gift, wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe New Year's Eve.

President Peters: Thanked the council clerk for their work and appreciated Wes and Paul for attending. He wished Rich a happy birthday and everyone a Merry Christmas, looking forward to seeing them next year.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:44pm

Attestation: Minutes approved, filed in Auditor's Office, and posted on City of London website for public review.

Matthew Edgington, Council Clerk	Joshua Peters, Council President
Date	Date