

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Council

Meeting

DAYTON LEGAL BLANK, INC., FORM NO. 10148

Held May 11, 2026

Rittman City Council Met in a
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, May 11, 2026
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Sonya Hayward, Rich Schumacher, Melissa Shows, Don Sweigert and Nick Huff
Members Absent: Amanda Nelson
Presiding: Mayor Rudy Arnold

The invocation was given by Pastor Clark Genet followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Presentation – Tina Ludwig from the Office of the Auditor of State presented proclamations to Officer Hunter and Jesse Robertson.

Oath of Office – Michael Edward Davis, II as a full time police officer. Mayor Arnold administered the Oath of Office.

Approval of Minutes

- a. April 13, 2026. moved to approve, upon roll call Schumacher – Yes, Huff – Yes, Shows – Yes, Sweigert – Abstain, Hayward - Yes and **motion carried.**
- b. April 16, 2026 Special Meeting. moved to approve, Schumacher – Yes, Huff – Yes, Shows – Yes, Sweigert – Abstain, Hayward - Yes and **motion carried.**

Citizens Forum

Brandon Aamot – 65 Beech Street- spoke regarding the storm sewers on Beech Street backing up in a recent rainfall. The creek at IGA was not at max capacity. This is a common issue. We have no fail safes on this road. This flooded my side yard and went into my basement, and I had 5 ½ feet of water in it. I’m tired of the flooding issues. The damage exceeds \$50,000.00. I appreciate the city workers, but false hopes and no ideas doesn’t fix the problem.

Pam Wolfe – 145 W. Sunset Drive – I saw in old business that there was a data center. Is that so we don’t get one? The next question, on the agenda there are amendments on the charter, there are a lot of numbers, we don’t know what the numbers are for, we don’t know what the amendments contain, or what is going to be changed. Shows stated that the entire document is on rittman.com.

Old Business

None

New Business

- a. Proclamation – National Police Week May 10 – 16, 2026. Mayor Arnold proclaimed National Police Week as May 10 - 16, 2026 in the City of Rittman and encouraged the community to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies and activities.
- b. Proclamation – Emergency Medical Services Week May 17 – 23, 2026. Mayor Arnold proclaimed Emergency Medical Services Week as May 17 - 23, 2026 in the City of Rittman and encouraged the community to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies and activities.

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c. **Ord. No. 8522 An Ordinance of the Council of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties and State of Ohio, amending the Annual Appropriation Ordinance No. 8492, as amended according to the attached sheet(s) and declaring an emergency.** Three Readings. Ord No. 8522 was read on first reading. Sweigert moved to suspend the rules, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.** Shows moved to adopt. Sweigert inquired if the Capital Budget is established at the beginning of the year. Is something more expensive than what we appropriated? Marcum stated that the Capital is replacement of a vehicle for the administration and this vehicle was not put on the Capital Plan when we originally put it though. This was not a planned purchase, therefore, I needed to put an appropriation through. Sweigert asked if it wasn't on the five year cap plan that we approved. What administration vehicle is it? Beshara stated that it is the 2018 city car. Sweigert wanted to know if there was something wrong with it. Beshara stated that there are lights coming on that are questionable. It's starting to get rust on it, electronics aren't keeping up with modern technology, so therefore there is not a GPS on it anymore. Sweigert stated that the \$5,000.00 isn't buying a new one. Beshara stated it is a new one, but that would be the downpayment. We are looking to buy from Laria. Sweigert stated that the second item in contractual services; I'm sure that is for the sewer plant. Marcum responded that it is sewer plant maintenance and repair. It was an original plan to just repair and now we are replacing. We are now creating the budget to replace it instead. All Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.**

d. **Res. No. 8523 A Resolution of the Council of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties and State of Ohio, authorizing the Finance Director to issue Blanket Certificates for purchases not to exceed the unencumbered balance in the expenditure account and declaring an emergency.** First Reading. Res. No. 8523 was read on first reading. Sweigert moved to place on second. Marcum explained that per Ohio Revised Code we are required to have this put through by Council to approve us to have blanket purchase orders. A blanket purchase order is when you expect expenses to continue happening, like the electric bill, any gas bills, your phones, paper towels, cleaning supplies, things like that. At the beginning of the year we open a blanket purchase order in different companies so we can always go back to it, we don't have to reopen a purchase order every time we make a purchase. This is just stating that you are aware we have blanket purchase orders and that we will never make that blanket more than the money you have approved for us to have in the budget. All Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.**

e. **Res. No. 8524 A Resolution of the Council of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties and State of Ohio, to provide a general election to amend the Charter of the City of Rittman by repeal of Article 9.05 and amending or adding Sections 3.01, 3.03, 3.06, 3.07, 3.09, 4.01, 4.03, 4.05, 5.01, 6.02, 6.05, 7.01, 7.02, 9.01, 9.02, 9.03, 9.04, 11.01, 12.02, 12.03, 12.06, 13.01, 13.04 and 16.01.** First Reading. Res. No. 8523 was read on first reading. Schumacher moved to place on second. Charles Copley stated thanks to all of his fellow members Charter Review Commission as well. We had some valuable discussions during the several meetings that we met, basically going line by line through every chapter of the charter. I just wanted to give a summary as to our thinking was as we were going through the charter. The first item was number and terms under section 3.01, the County actually came to us and requested that we look at moving the start date of the terms from the first of December to after the first of the year. This allows time for recounts and so forth and allows you to get members of Council on the same time. 3.06 just to revise the organizational meeting from December to January, matching the terms of Council. 2.09 is a new section we are recommending to be added. It does deal with removal of a Council Member due to several conditions, it would be up to the remainder of Council to determine that and have a hearing and advise them. 4.01 again a change from December to January. 4.03 changes that the Mayor shall not preside at executive sessions to the Mayor shall not attend executive sessions unless invited. 4.05 looks at the vacancy of the Mayor's position and gives the President of Council a choice whether they accept the Mayor's position or allows another person to be appointed. The current language requires that they

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take that position. 5.01 the commission felt that it was necessary to that the Municipal Manager be reviewed on an annual basis and to codify that into our charter. 6.02 due to Fire and EMS being combined basically consolidating in the charter as well. 6.05 there is wording within this section that requires a majority of the members elected to Council to appoint a law director. The recommended change is to remove the members elected to. Basically that allows the Mayor when acting as a Council member to provide that tie breaker if they need to. 7.01 deals with the Planning Commission and since a member of Council is on the Planning Commission they have to adjust the dates. No changes in article 8, Board of Zoning Appeals. 9.01 language to be removed requesting to be a City. 9.02 looking at all of the boards and commissions that the City has, most of them are three year terms, the Civil Service Commission is a six year term. We are suggesting to change it to three years. 9.03 again, Fire and EMS has been combined in the charter. 9.04 same thing. 11.01 a recommendation to add a Council member to the cemetery board. 12.02 changing the date that the report is due to December 31 instead of by January 1. 12.03 salaries and bonds December to January. 12.06 again the Commission felt that it was necessary that the Finance Director be reviewed on an annual basis unless Council chooses to waive that. 13.01 again coming from the county's recommendations, currently petitions are due to the Board of Elections 75 days prior. Everywhere else in the county is different. We are recommending to align with everyone else to 90 days prior. 13.04 we are recommending that the qualifications be reduced from two years down to one year. If you lived in the city one year you should have the opportunity to serve either as Mayor or Council. 16.01 there was concern that new Council members who are sworn in are asked to appoint a Charter Review Commission so the thought is to move it to the year prior to the new Council. The next Charter Review will be 2035 instead of 2036. All Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**.

f. **Motion to cancel the May 25, 2026 Council Meeting due to the Memorial Day Holiday.** Schumacher so moved, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**.

City Manager's Remarks

I want to welcome our new police officer and also our two full time firemen. We are looking for a third full time person. We got the AMAT's grant for \$50,000.00 for the downtown study, there were seven applicants and we scored second highest and they only gave out two grants and we were one of them. Hopefully we will start working on it in the fall. Also thank you Charles and to the Committee, you did a great job. It was a pleasure working with you. Memorial Day we will be closed. We celebrate those who put their lives literally on the line for us. I wanted to read something because I know there has been a lot of talk about the flags on the tree lawn. I wrote something that I want to read so that people understand who I am.

I respect and deeply value the role the American flag plays in our community and in the lives of our residents. The purpose of these regulations is not to limit patriotism or diminish anyone's right to display the flag, but to ensure that our public spaces remain safe, accessible, and consistently maintained for everyone.

As city manager, I have a responsibility to apply standards fairly across all uses of the public right-of-way, including tree lawns, signage, decorations, and temporary displays. These rules are content-neutral and are based on public safety, visibility, maintenance access, and equal enforcement - not on the message or symbol being displayed.

I fully support residents expressing their patriotism, and nothing in these guidelines prevents lawful flag display on private property or during approved community events. In fact, I believe patriotism is strengthened when we work together respectfully as we follow consistent standards, and preserve both civic pride and the shared spaces that belong to all members of the community.

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I just want to say personally my father was a WWII and Korean War Veteran and I proudly display his picture of him on his ship with all of his fellow shipmates. My husband was a Vietnam Vet. who suffered terribly from PTSD and died at the age of 49. I have multiple flags on my property, I keep them up from Memorial Day until Veterans Day. I take them down when the weather is bad. I'm very patriotic and I don't want anyone to think otherwise, no matter what you read, what you believe. I just wanted to get that out there. I love this Country and I love Rittman.

Finance Director's Remarks

I wanted to let you know that the 2024 Audit has been finalized. We are obviously going right into 2025, so be prepared to be contacted on any budget questions that might come up. I've also been working on the digital budget book which will be presented to the citizens on our transparency page. You will be able to see our budget after it's finalized by Council. It defines everything in the budget, it talks about all of our projects coming into the year. Any kind of question financially that you may have will be answered in this book. I just want everybody to be ready for that to go out. Beshara stated that Chrystal has done a great job with the Audit. It has been mind numbing for her. Congratulations on getting that done and on to 2025.

a. **Approval of Financial Report for April, 2026.** Shows moved to approve, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.**

Second Citizens Forum

None

Council Remarks

Hayward – thank you everybody for coming out. Congratulations to our new fire department and two guys on the police department. The Legion is going to be getting flags ready to go on Thursday at 6:00 p.m.

Schumacher – thank you everyone for coming out. I want to thank Charles Copley and the entire Charter Review Commission. I attended most of them. They were very, very thorough. Every single number had input into every aspect. I was thoroughly impressed with they way they went though every line. We appreciate your service. I'm glad that we have been able to come to an agreement/resolution to be able to put the American Flags out. I'm very happy about that that's been worked out. The sign ordinance will be coming before Council next month. We are going to get through everything and bring it up to date. There is a lot of stuff there that needs to be changed. I wanted to thank everyone who showed up to help put the American Flags on the Veterans graves in Rittman and the surrounding cemeteries, we did that on Saturday. The cemetery was quite wet. Thank you very much for coming out.

Beshara stated that she is waiting on a list as to where the flags are to go. I asked Mr. Crawford if we could have that list for our service department.

Huff – I'm not anti flag at all and I know there has been a lot of talk on Facebook that we are not approving the flags. But there are things that are misled and not factual. So the rule of Government does have the right to determine what is allowed in the tree lawn. Every city around here that I have called, Orrville, Wooster. Jon mentioned in his Facebook post, they do over 1,800 flags and they all use the same thing. It's 3 foot off the curb, a 1 inch pole inside of conduit, that conduit is in the ground and it stays there. The reason they do this for underground utilities, gas lines, waterlines and any other curbs, drains and anything like that. The reason that they also do that is they take responsibility for damages. As a City, if we say that you can do this, and we set no rules and boundaries for those, if your gas line hurt, the Legion does not have a bond to cover that insurance. It could blow up your house or they flood your house because they hit a water line, who is responsible? This is what every city is doing and this is what we have agreed on now. I think this is pretty

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close to what Bobbie approved in the original time. If I am mistaken, the original thing was going to stay up for six months. From next week until the Fourth of July. Any one who knows flags that in six months in the weather, it is going to get tattered, torn and weathered. That is a disrespect to the flag.

Shows – I want to say congratulations to Officer Hunter and Jesse Robertson for their awards from the State. Welcoming officer Michael Davis, he came to us from Akron. He is filling the position of someone who is getting ready to retire. National Police Week thanking all of our officers for your service, dispatchers. I also want to do a special shout out to Darilee McGregor who takes much pride in the front of the Police Department. She put in a new rock garden. Getting it to looking asthenic to celebrate these officers and her bother’s Benjie’s rock sits by the front door. Thank you EMS for your services especially this week. I want to thank Bob and his officers, they have completely redone the police department and they have done all of the work themselves. Thanks to the fire department for letting them move into the meeting room during renovations.

Sweigert – Congratulation on getting the AMAT’s finance. Also, good job on the audit. The flags on the tree lawn, what are the time. Beshara responded the week before, the Monday before and the Monday after the holiday. However, as a reminder if the flags are in the tree lawn. Simpson stated our sign ordinance says that flags are not signs, but that’s not true they are signs that is not a constitutional provision that exists in our sign ordinance. The sign ordinance has be to enforced in a content neutral way. By allowing American Flags to be displayed in the tree lawn for whatever period of time, we have to allow all signs to exist in the tree lawn. We can’t say only American Flags are allowed in the tree lawn. It has to be all or none during that time period. We can’t enforce unevenly either. Sweigert inquired if this would be addressed in a new sign ordinance. Simpson replied yes. Simpson stated sign ordinance aside, that’s our right of way, if we don’t want something in our right of way, we have the right to remove it. Sweigert proposed that legislation be drafted to send to voters to increase income tax to 2.5% from the 1.5% it currently is. Along with that would be a credit to the citizens that live within the city limits of 1.5%. In essence, taking their tax burden to 1% for citizens. The Finance Director did the research with RITA and it would generate over \$900,000.00 dollars of income into the general fund. The benefit is we would reduce our citizens income tax burden from 1.5 to 1%. Unfortunately, the other 1% on the people who are coming into Rittman for work. Right now we are paying 1.5 and they are paying 1.5 and they are getting the same benefits driving on our roads, using our city utilities. The income generated could be earmarked for infrastructure, maybe storm sewers, sidewalks, pot holes. Beshara stated that Council voted on the credit back. Matt you will have to look into that to see if the voters can vote on this or Council has to do it. Recording of the meetings is something I brought up in December and then other people have brought it us since, it is going to be recorded and put on? Shows stated that we are looking at ways to do it effectively. Right now we are in the we are still in the testing phases. YouTube was the most user-friendly easy way to do it. We currently have one meeting up. The camera is up on the windowsill. Once we close the video it take anywhere from 12 to 18 hours for it to be released by YouTube. Then we can share it on Facebook.

Beshara – we have a resident who always came to our meetings, Jerry McAvinew. Jerry would talk about sidewalks, and how dangerous they were and he would bring doughnuts into our staff. We really loved Jerry, and he passed away last week.

Mayor Arnold – I wanted to thank Mayor Robertson and a few others that took the time out and gave Commissioner Hoffstetter a tour of the Nature Preserve and the train station a few weeks ago. Also, Community Cleanup last Saturday was really something to see everybody come out and support that. I also want to thank some National Honor Society students from the high school as well as a few others that placed flags at the cemetery and others surrounding. The Memorial Day Parade will start at 10:30 on Erie Street. The services at the cemetery will be immediately following the parade. It usually starts around 11:15. Also thank you to Mr. Copley and the Charter Review Commission. I want to thank everyone for coming out tonight. This is exactly how this should work. I apologize for missing the last two Council Meetings due to work commitments. As of yesterday I was

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selected as the Director of Ohio Western National Cemetery. I will no longer be traveling as much.

a. Motion to Go Into Executive Session to Discuss Employee Compensation and Invite the City Manager, the Mayor and the Law Director - 8:23 pm Schumacher so moved. Second by Shows, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.**

b. Motion to Come Out of Executive Session – 8:53 pm Shows so moved, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.**

Adjourn: 8:54 p.m. Hayward moved to adjourn, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.**


Mayor


Clerk of Council