

President Chad Doll called the meeting to order at 7:30pm on July 21, 2025 at 701 Parlette Court with the following members present: Alex Stinebaugh, Jessica Muhlenkamp, Brandon Miller, Alex Greve, John Sheipline, Terry Campbell and Chad Dunlap. Safety Service Director Tyler Price, Mayor Dan Lee and Law Director Grant Neal were also present. There were 4 visitors present.

Motion by Dunlap, second by Campbell to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2025 council meeting as submitted. Vote – 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Finance Committee – a meeting was held on 07-14-2025 and the following was discussed:

The primary topic of discussion was the proposal to utilize a portion of the lodging tax fund to reimburse the city departments for work that they do to support non-profit events in the community. Previously, much of this work was done by the city without compensation. In order to balance the needs of the city departments, while also continuing to welcome non-profit events in the community, the committee decided that using a portion of lodging tax for this purpose was the best middle-ground solution, especially since “Special Events” is one of the categories in the lodging tax ordinance. As a part of this conversation, the auditor noted that, per her checking, all of the lodging tax revenues are currently going into the proper lodging tax line.

The committee determined, after a discussion, that SSD Price would develop a resolution each year to request the proper amount from the lodging tax fund for this purpose, and this year we will do a half-year resolution. Motion by Campbell to recommend to administration, as part of the budget process, that we allocate a sufficient amount each year from the expected lodging tax revenue for the purpose of reimbursing city departments for work performed to support local non-profit events, and that a resolution would be drafted and voted on by council to follow proper lodging tax allocation rules. The motion included drafting a half-year ordinance this year. Second by Sheipline. Motion passed unanimously.

There were a few other topics discussed. First, Law Director Neal and Auditor Anderson will review the original Hauss-Helms fund ordinance and financial instruments to determine whether council can allocate principal from that fund for parks and pool improvements. It was noted by the auditor that the money is currently held in three separate certificates of deposit (CD's).

There was a short discussion regarding combining the parks and pool funds to simplify parks and recreation revenue and expense accounting. This is a mixed bag, and there are still questions outstanding. SSD Price showed the committee a potential restructuring of the parks department to be placed under Public Works. The administration will review combining the funds and further conversations will occur in the future, particularly as we get closer to the renewal of the parks levy. This conversation on restructuring also included potential uses for the streets levy dollars that are legal per the ordinance, including labor for street improvements.

There was a short discussion regarding the potential of developing a 501c3 “Parks Foundation” so that people could donate directly to the parks system. It was noted that Celina has such a program, and so Law Director Neal will check with the Law Director in Celina regarding their program and report back.

The committee then discussed HB 355, which is currently in committee in the Ohio House of Representatives. This legislation, if passed, would raise the required vote threshold to pass local levies from 50%+1 to 60%. Chairman Miller voiced his opposition to this legislation, as it potentially takes power away from local communities to fund important programs and makes it much harder to support local initiatives.

The committee briefly discussed the likelihood for an expansion of the police department space. We are early on in the process, but administration is putting a plan together to expand space given our growing police department.

The auditor had a few topics to discuss, including savings of \$3,000 on sales tax at the waterpark and a request that we determine a more stable way of paying for the veteran's banner work outside of lodging tax. She reinforced her support for the veterans, but noted that the system needs to change.

Mr. Sheipline presented some information regarding state level changes to property taxes as a result of recent legislative action at the statehouse.

Mr. Dunlap asked if the lodging tax resolution could be used retroactively. SSD Price answered that this is up to the discretion of Council.

President Doll asked if Mayor Lee has discussed HB 355 with other mayors from surrounding communities. Mayor Lee answered, yes, and these concerns were also addressed with Ohio State Representative Angie King. HB 113 and recreational marijuana tax were also discussed.

Mr. Campbell asked what other communities charge for lodging tax. SSD Price answered that some counties and major cities have the ability to charge higher amounts.

Lodging Tax Committee – a meeting was held on 07-17-2025 and the following was discussed:

The meeting began with a review of the feedback from the previous Council Meeting as well as individual feedback from City Council. The Councilors were positive about the rubric saying that it was a good way to compare projects that were not necessarily easy to compare to one another. There continued to be questions about whether or not the data and repeat applicant questions were helpful. The Council was positive about the Lodging Tax and felt that the committee was doing a good job. They expressed interest in the plan to allow for Lodging Tax dollars to pay for special events. There were also questions about the number of Parks projects which appeared in the Lodging Tax history and whether those projects would be better served to be paid out of the Parks budget.

After the feedback there was some discussion about whether the rubric should be changed or if Lodging Tax should change the way they meet about projects such as meeting less frequently throughout the year or if we felt the Committee was still helpful to Council. The Committee decided to move forward using the rubric as written to assess the outstanding applications. According to the City's records \$35,076 has been spent from the account with approximately \$75,000 left for the year.

The first outstanding application was from the Downtown Wapakoneta Partnership for a picnic table at Heritage Parkway. Their application indicated they were looking at funding from both the Lodging Tax and the Wapakoneta Area Community Foundation to fund two tables in the Parkway that would match those at the PickleBall Courts. The request was for \$3000. The project scored a 21 on the rubric. The Committee was very positive about the project but interested in solar powered options and whether the group had considered those. Jessica will reach out to them to discuss changing their request to provide a solar powered table.

The next application was from Children's Hometown Holiday. They have a large number of activities during the event each year and this year had three priorities: Fireworks (\$3800), Carriage Rides (\$2550), and Railway Rides (\$1700) for a total ask of \$8050. The project scored a 21 on the rubric. There was a brief discussion about how they would advertise that the funds were from the Lodging Tax. Eric Ireland made a motion to approve the full funding request as long as there was signage thanking the Lodging Tax. There was a second by Dan Lee, the motion was approved.

The third request was from the Lunar Landing Disc Golf Club. With a total ask of \$38,046 they were looking for dollars for drainage (\$6568), parking (\$6200), B Baskets (\$4300), trash receptacles (\$3278), benches (\$10,500), and picnic tables (\$7200). There was some discussion about other ways this project could be funded such as working with the school as it is on school property and additional sponsorships by local businesses. The Committee was glad to see the large amount of data that was provided by the club including the fact that players had come from 12 different states and 35% of those who played the course traveled between 20-50 miles to come to the course. The project scored a 22 on the rubric. Eric Ireland made a motion to fund the project with \$18,000 with priority given to B Baskets, drainage and parking. There was a second by Dan Lee, the motion was approved.

The final application was a Phase 2 project for the Big Flag at I-75 for a Missing Man table to represent POW/MIA soldiers. Dave Christiansen reported that the cabin was in process and estimated that 40 million people drive by on I-75 every year. He stated that the hotel was interested in keeping track of the number of people who go out to the site to view it. The project scored a 20 on the rubric. Dan Lee made a motion to approve \$4500 for the project with a second by Eric Ireland the project was approved.

Motion by Muhlenkamp, second by Campbell to approve \$8050 for Children's' Hometown Holiday to purchase fireworks, railway and carriage rides. Vote – 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Motion by Muhlenkamp, second by Miller to approve \$18,000 for the Lunar Landing Disc Golf Club to be spent for B Baskets, drainage and parking. Mr. Greve asked for the remaining balance of lodging tax funds. Mrs. Muhlenkamp answered, approximately \$50,000. Mr. Miller reminded Council about the upcoming resolution utilizing lodging tax funds to reimburse city services. Mr. Greve asked for the amount

that will be needed for city services this year. SSD Price stated the amount of lodging tax funds used for this will remain up to Council and will also vary each year. Mr. Miller asked for City Administration to provide Council with a specific figure regarding funds for city services for this year. Vote – 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Motion by Muhlenkamp, second by Campbell to approve \$4500 for a 'Missing Man' table to represent POW/MIA soldiers to be located at the I-75 Big Flag. Vote – 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Communications -

Clerk McDonald read a notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control noting a permit change from: Bhavik LLC 803 Apollo Drive, Wapakoneta, Ohio to: Gastown 1 LLC, DBA 803 Apollo Drive, 803 Apollo Drive, Wapakoneta, Ohio. Council did not request a hearing.

President Doll noted a letter received from Jim & Barb Price of 14248 Kohler Road regarding a complaint about noxious weeds growing on a city owned field adjoining their property. SSD Price is aware of this complaint. Clerk McDonald will provide a copy of same to all councilors.

Guest Petitions -

Mr. Isaac Puff of 11 Eastlake Drive submitted a check to the City of Wapakoneta for \$1637.38 in leftover funds from his Eagle Scout project at Veterans Park, to be earmarked for further park enhancements. Mr. Puff reminded Council that his Eagle Scout project involved creating and installing two new games and nine park map signs for Veterans Park.

Mr. Ross Kantner of 1215 Oakridge Court and Mr. John Wehner of 802 Dearbaugh Avenue, both representing the Recreation Advisory Commission, stated their group is seeking more information from Council in order to make proper recommendations. In particular, the group is seeking further details on: the function and financial standing of the Hauss-Helms fund, the 2026 park levy renewal and possible increase, and park foundation opportunities. Mr. Kantner requested SSD Price and Law Director Neal attend a Recreation Advisory Commission meeting to provide guidance to the group. Mr. Kantner supplied a resource booklet to Councilman Miller for his review regarding foundations and funding for parks. The next RAC meeting will be held August 11, 2025 at 8pm at City Hall. Mr. Campbell pointed out that the City now has an employee dedicated to grant work.

Unfinished Business –

Mr. Miller noted the final draft of the City's Comprehensive Plan is now available.

New Business -

President Doll announced the first Council meeting in September will be moved to Tuesday, September 2nd at 7:30pm due to the holiday.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Ord 2025-24 for the third time re: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND SAFETY, OR HIS DESIGNEE, TO APPLY FOR AND ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS FOR GRANTS FROM VARIOUS ENTITIES.

Motion by Dunlap, second by Greve to adopt Ord 2025-24. Vote – 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Ord 2025-27 for the second time re: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 660.14 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WAPAKONETA SPECIFIC TO THE FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH A NOTICE TO CUT GRASS, WEEDS, OR VEGETATION OR REMOVE BRUSH, LIMBS, OR DOWNED TREES.

Mr. Miller asked that the ordinance be updated to reflect an increased penalty fee.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Ord 2025-28 for the first time re: AN ORDINANCE REPEALING CHAPTER 1476 TITLED "FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION" OF PART FOURTEEN OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES AND ENACTING A NEW CHAPTER 1476 TITLED "FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION" OF SAID CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WAPAKONETA.

SSD Price noted the new flood plain maps arrived in the mail last week.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Res 2025-29 for the first time re: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF LODGING TAX FUNDS TO REIMBURSE CITY DEPARTMENTS FOR SERVICES PROVIDED TO CERTAIN SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE CITY OF WAPAKONETA

SSD Price noted he has left the amount open for Council's discretion. Mrs. Muhlenkamp and Mr. Miller requested City Administration provide the figure needed for this year, and include a summary of the costs of city services from the large events already held. Mr. Miller further pointed out language within a portion of Section 4, asking Law Director Neal to ensure that Council remains the authority regarding the expenditure of funds.

Mayor Report:

National Night Out is scheduled for August 5th at 6pm at Harmon Park.

Met with Ohio State Representative Angie King.

Met with Dan Bennett, retired Auglaize County Engineer, to explore the possibility of constructing a walking bridge over the Auglaize River near the city's Water Reclamation Plant.

Met with ten German student visitors and their advisors.

Meeting scheduled with Wapak Chamber of Commerce to recap summer events in planning for 2026.

Thank you to Wapak Fire Department and citizens for their response to a fire within a business on Auglaize Street over the weekend.

Please continue to shop local and help our Wapakoneta businesses.

Work continues to locate grants for the 'Rails to Trails' program between Wapakoneta and St. Marys.

Mr. Campbell pointed out an application within Council materials for a revitalization district expansion from Mr. David Schlenker, and noted a possible error on the document ties the application to 211 Silver Street residential address.

Mr. Dunlap suggested that City Administration recognize the two youths who alerted adults to the fire on downtown Auglaize Street this past weekend.

Service Director Report:

Welcome new police officer Jack Boos to the police department.

Wellness app was launched for police department.

Over 3000 people attended the championships at the Wapak Waterpark.

Electric Department has an outage scheduled for First English Church on July 25th, followed by additional scheduled outages for August 6th & 9th.

Final painting of Maple Street tower is complete.

One bid for street projects was received to include Plum Street.

Clerk McDonald announced a public hearing will be scheduled for September 2nd, 7:15pm at City Hall regarding Mr. David Schlenker's revitalization district application.

Mr. Miller asked what Council will need to do regarding the expiration of the 'Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area' program. SSD Price answered that Council will need to pass a new ordinance in the fall to keep the program.

Mr. Miller asked Law Director Neal to research the City's permitting process regarding door to door solicitation.

President Doll asked the City to consider painting stop bars at Heritage Drive and Harrison Street.

Additionally, the intersection of Harrison and Defiance is in need of signage to indicate turn lanes.

Mr. Miller noted there is a new stop sign at Bellefontaine and Water Streets. SSD Price stated this was decided by Choice One Engineering.

Mrs. Muhlenkamp asked for procedure details regarding the parks levy renewal process.

President Doll answered that legislation is needed in order to put the matter on the ballot for consideration and asked SSD Price to check with the Board of Elections on the process. Mr. Miller requested that Auditor Anderson be involved in these preparations.

Law Director Report:

Mr. Neal stated he will speak to Celina’s law director regarding foundations and 501c3 details.

Mr. Neal clarified that the Hauss-Helms funds ordinance draws a distinction between how the principal versus interest monies can be used. The language is from an ordinance the City of Wapakoneta passed in 1979 and the City may amend it. The language states the interest is to be used for the funding of parks, but the principal can be used for construction. The funds are in cds, not held within a trust. Mr. Miller suggested the Parks Committee revisit the ordinance language for discussion.

Scheduling Committee Meetings:

Park Committee will attend the Recreation Advisory Commission meeting to be held on August 11th at 8pm at City Hall.

Motion by Campbell, second by Sheipline to adjourn the meeting at 8:34pm. Vote – 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

President

Clerk of Council