

City of Fairfield Minutes
Regular Meeting of City Council
January 12, 2026

Council-Manager Briefing

No briefing.

Business Meeting Call to Order

Mayor Miller called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Prayer/Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Miller led in prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Councilmembers present included:

Councilmember, 1st Ward Leslie Besl
Councilmember, 2nd Ward Dale Paullus
Councilmember, 3rd Ward Debbie Pennington
Councilmember, 4th Ward Adam Kraft
Councilmember, At-Large Tim Meyers
Councilmember, At-Large Gwen Brill

Councilmembers excused included:

Councilmember, At-Large Matt Davidson

Councilmember Kraft, seconded by Councilmember Besl, moved to excuse Councilmember Davidson. Motion carried 6-0.

Agenda Modifications

None.

Executive Session Requests

None.

Special Presentations

1. Be the Change, Feeding 500 Thanks You - John Wagner

Mr. Wagner thanked the City and community for their support of the recent food drive, "Feeding 500." He expressed his excitement for potential growth of the programs that Be the Change is involved in. Mayor Miller thanked him for his work in the community and offered his support for future projects and campaigns.

Citizen Comments

Robert Kramer, 5690 Genevieve Place - introduced himself to City Council and detailed some of his history, including three books he has written. Mayor Miller asked him what his concern was

and Mr. Kramer stated that he was trying to establish himself as a rational person, when some people will want to tell the Council he is not, and to build credibility when he comes back next month because some people will say not to listen to him. Mr. Kramer noted his connections to several Councilmembers, as well as Judge Campbell.

Michelle Sparto, 5500 Southgate Blvd - Ms. Sparto stated that she is a lifelong resident that loves the city. She said that she had issues with tax division and the same issues continue after being assured they would be resolved. She is concerned that the division is unorganized and not improving and would like to know what can be done. She would also like to know how many people have accidentally paid twice, because she is concerned about the elderly and disabled people that might not know any better. She asked if the city needs an audit. She stated that she appreciates city services and is concerned that they might be at risk due to the disorganization of the tax division. She also noted that tax issues could have professional ramifications for her and her husband if reported on their credit reports. Mayor Miller assured her that the city will review the division after tax season and try to come up with ways to improve by late spring or early summer.

Council Reports

Councilmember Paullus announced that January 9 was Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, and he expressed City Council's appreciation for law enforcement in the City.

Councilmember Pennington announced that Public Works is wrapping up leaf pick-up and making another trip through the City to make sure none were missed after cold and snow in December.

Councilmember Meyers reported that Public Utilities held a groundbreaking for the solar field this morning. The field will power the Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is the highest utility user in the city.

Councilmember Brill read a letter from Marris, LLC formerly Al Neyer, expressing appreciation for improvements done to Seward Road to help prepare the area for economic development.

Public Hearing(s)

None

Approval of Minutes

1. Regular Meeting Minutes - December 8, 2025

The Regular Meeting Minutes of December 8, 2025 were approved as written and submitted.

Old Business

1. Development Services - Councilmember Gwen Brill

a. Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 166-84, the Codified Ordinances of Fairfield,

Ohio, Section 1130.01(B)(2), the City of Fairfield, Ohio, Zoning Map by approving the revised concept plan and final development plan for the Patterson Place Planned Unit Development.

Councilmember Gwen Brill, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to amend per Planning Commission recommendation and further amend to incorporate the additional conditions stated in the attached amendment. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

Councilmember Brill presented the second reading of this ordinance.

New Business - Motion to Read All New Business by Title Only

Councilmember Besl, seconded by Councilmember Paullus, moved to read all New Business by title only. Motion carried 6-0.

1. Community & Public Relations - Councilmember Matt Davidson

- a. Simple Motion: Formal recognition and/or approval of Council assignments and appointments dated January 1, 2026.

It is recommended that City Council recognize and approve the following Council appointments via simple motion of Council:

Vice Mayor - Tim Meyers
Community & Public Relations - Matt Davidson
Development Services - Gwen Brill
Parks, Recreation & Environment - Adam Kraft
Public Safety - Dale Paullus
Public Utilities - Tim Meyers
Public Works - Debbie Pennington
Finance & Budget - Leslie Besl

Board of Zoning Appeals - Debbie Pennington
Sustainability Commission - Gwen Brill
Community Improvement Corp - Gwen Brill & Leslie Besl
OKI - Dale Paullus
OKI Alternate - Steve Miller
Emergency Management Agency - Dale Paullus
SELF Board - Tim Meyers
Butler County Health Council - Leslie Besl

Councilmember Meyers, seconded by Councilmember Pennington, moved to approve Council assignments and appointments dated January 1, 2026. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 1-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- b. Simple Motion: Motion to appoint the Clerk of Council as designee for mandatory training required by House Bill 9, Ohio's Public Records Act.

Councilmember Meyers, seconded by Councilmember Brill, moved to appoint the Clerk of

Council as designee for HB9/Sunshine Law Training. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 2-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- c. Ordinance to authorize an amendment of the Employment Agreement for the City Manager and declaring an emergency.

It is recommended that City Council adopt an Ordinance authorizing an amendment to the Employment Agreement of the City Manager. An adjustment to the Manager's base pay will take effect as of his February 1, 2026 anniversary date as City Manager and the agreed 2025 incentive payment is included in the amendment. The City Manager has served the City in his current capacity as City Manager since February 7, 2022. The Employment Agreement provides for an annual review of the Manager's performance; which has been accomplished. The City Council desires to provide an increase in annual compensation to the Manager and an incentive payment based upon his achievements and the successful performance of his job duties and assignments during calendar year 2025.

Councilmember Meyers presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Tim Meyers, seconded by Gwen Brill, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Tim Meyers, seconded by Dale Paullus, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 1-26. APPROVED 6-0.

2. Development Services - Councilmember Gwen Brill

- a. Ordinance to authorize the City Manager to enter into a two (2) year professional services contract with the Fairfield Chamber of Commerce.

This ordinance authorizes the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Contract with the Fairfield Chamber of Commerce. The contract is evaluated every two years and pertains to the City's sponsorship of the Chamber, including business retention services. The Fairfield Chamber is an important economic development partner with the City.

The proposed two-year contract would continue the City's Platinum Sustaining Sponsorship of the Fairfield Chamber for calendar years 2026 and 2027. The City would receive ongoing recognition for its sponsorship; complementary admissions to the Chamber Annual Meeting, Women Mean Business Gala, and Focus on Fairfield events; two complimentary registrations for Leadership Fairfield; and coordination of four annual business roundtables.

In addition, the Chamber would assist with important business retention assistance by conducting surveys of local businesses. Over the past 15 years, the Chamber has completed approximately 1,550 business retention surveys, mainly with small retail and commercial businesses. These surveys provide valuable insight into the needs and concerns of the business community.

Councilmember Brill presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Gwen Brill, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Gwen Brill, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 2-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- b. Ordinance to authorize the City Manager to submit an application and accept a grant from the Ohio Department of Development's Residential Economic Development District (REDD) Grants Program and declaring an emergency.

The Residential Economic Development District (REDD) Grants Program, passed by the Ohio General Assembly in the state's biennium budget bill, awards grants to support the creation of workforce housing near major economic development projects across the state. As several qualifying major economic development projects—defined as projects creating 700 new jobs or \$700 million in investment—are located within 20 miles of Fairfield, projects located in the city qualify. Eligible projects must meet the definition as a major workforce project by creating at least 100 new units of housing.

Administered by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), the REDD Program will provide \$10 million statewide for projects in the current state fiscal year. Applications must be submitted to ODOD no later than January 16, 2025. Municipal corporations are eligible to apply in collaboration with a housing developer.

Staff is proposing to submit an application for \$450,000 to support the proposed public roadway improvements to John Gray Road at Pleasant Avenue. These improvements were identified by the traffic study and community input received during review of the adjacent 104-unit condominium development proposed by Schnicke Development Group.

Councilmember Brill presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Gwen Brill, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Gwen Brill, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 3-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- c. Resolution appointing Economic Development Manager Nathaniel Kaelin to the West Chester Township Joint Economic Development District Board of Directors.

The City of Fairfield entered into a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) contract with West Chester Township and the City of Springdale in 2009. As per the contract and per the Ohio Revised Code, the City of Fairfield is entitled to appoint one person to serve on the JEDD Board of Directors.

Nathaniel Kaelin was appointed to the JEDD Board by City Council in 2024 to fulfill the final two years of a four-year term vacated by Development Services Director Greg Kathman. Greg had served eight years and was no longer eligible to serve. The new term will be for four years (2026-2029).

Councilmember Brill presented the first reading of this resolution. Councilmember Gwen Brill, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Gwen Brill, seconded by Adam Kraft, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

RESOLUTION NO. 1-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- d. Resolution appointing James Mitchell and Peggy Jo Emerson to the board of the Fairfield Community Improvement Corporation.

The Fairfield CIC Code of Regulations (“bylaws”) establishes a board structure with seven directors. Five of the seven seats are designated for elected officials (Mayor and City Council Liaisons for Development Services and Finance) and city staff (City Manager and Finance Director). The remaining two seats are designated for two individuals from the Fairfield business community, including those representing the city’s largest employers; working in real estate, finance, development, or related fields; or representing the Fairfield Chamber of Commerce.

City Council appointed James (“Jim”) Mitchell and Peggy Emerson for the business community representative seats in 2023. Jim is a Fairfield resident and business owner, with extensive experience in commercial construction and development. Peggy is the President of the Fairfield Chamber. The bylaws establish three-year terms, meaning that Jim and Peggy’s initial terms have ended and both require reappointment to continue serving. Jim and Peggy have each indicated interest in continuing to serve on the CIC board.

Councilmember Brill presented the first reading of this resolution. Councilmember Gwen Brill, seconded by Debbie Pennington, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Gwen Brill, seconded by Adam Kraft, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

RESOLUTION NO. 2-26. APPROVED 6-0.

3. Public Safety - Councilmember Dale Paullus

- a. Simple Motion: Motion to not request a hearing regarding a liquor permit application in the name of Wawa Midwest LLC dba Wawa 7208, 7075 Dixie Highway, Fairfield, OH 45014 (Permit Class C1).

Councilmember Paullus, seconded by Councilmember Pennington, moved to not request a hearing regarding this liquor permit application. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 3-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- b. Simple Motion: Motion to not request a hearing regarding a liquor permit application in the name of QuikTrip Corp, QuikTrip 7091, 7330 Dixie Highway, Fairfield, OH 45014 (Permit Class C2 & D6).

Councilmember Paullus, seconded by Councilmember Kraft, moved to not request a hearing regarding this liquor permit application. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 4-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- c. Simple Motion: Motion to not request a hearing regarding a liquor permit application in the name of MSM Pleasant Inc., Grab N Go of Fairfield, 6330 Pleasant Avenue, Fairfield, OH 45014 (Permit Class C1 & C2).

Councilmember Paullus, seconded by Councilmember Pennington, moved to not request a hearing regarding this liquor permit application. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 5-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- d. Simple Motion: Motion to request a hearing regarding a liquor permit application in the name of S & JSS International LLC/Smokers Planet, 6600 Dixie Highway, St. D, Fairfield, OH 45014 (Permit Class C1 & C2).

Councilmember Paullus, seconded by Councilmember Brill, moved to request a hearing regarding this liquor permit application. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 6-26. APPROVED 6-0.

4. Public Works - Councilmember Debbie Pennington

- a. Ordinance to authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with WG Stang LLC for the proposed sidewalk along east side of Route 4 (between Symmes and Corwin).

There is a need for sidewalks to connect the east side of Route 4 between Symmes Road and just south of Corwin Avenue in Hamilton. This project will provide a sidewalk in compliance with current American with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations. The path will create a continuous sidewalk along Route 4 where none currently exists on the east side of the road.

The project will complete a continuous paved path on the east side of Route 4 from Nilles to the corporation limit with Hamilton.

Staff has briefed Council on our progress in implementing the recommendations of the connectivity plan and the need for sidewalks along Route 4 for the segment of our population that needs to access jobs and services and may not have reliable access to vehicular transportation. Considerable progress has been made in the last few years to connect sidewalks for much of the Route 4 corridor.

The City has been working to comply with the ADA regulation of putting in compliant sidewalk and curb ramps whenever practical and with new construction projects. This project falls within an area eligible for Community Development Block Grant funding which will provide much of the funding needed to complete a continuous paved path within this area in accordance with what was identified as a priority in the City's active

transportation plan – Fairfield Connects.

This was in the 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Program but will need to be taken from the 2026-2030 proposed CIP. It is proposed as 6PW46.

A public bid opening was held on December 15, 2025. Five (5) bids were received through BidExpress, opened and publicly read. The lowest and best complete bid was WG Stang of Hamilton, Ohio. The bid results are attached.

Councilmember Pennington presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Debbie Pennington, seconded by Dale Paullus, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Debbie Pennington, seconded by Adam Kraft, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 4-26. APPROVED 6-0.

b. Resolution declaring necessity of repairing sidewalks (including aprons).

The City has completed the process of sidewalk inspection thereby requiring repair and/or replacement of sidewalks for 2026 by the abutting property owners.

This is an ongoing program that was implemented in 1994 to inspect sidewalks and approach aprons citywide. The program was designed to complete inspections of all city sidewalks on a four (4) year rotating basis. Marking of sidewalks and aprons citywide has been completed for the 2026 program year. There are approximately 457 property locations marked for repair or replacement that are resident/business owner responsibility. There are approximately 8,100 Square Feet of 4" (sidewalk), 9,200 Square Feet of 7" (driveway aprons) concrete, and 1,200 Square Feet of 9" (commercial driveway aprons) concrete marked for replacement. There are 297 locations currently marked for repair via the cutting method. The cutting method has been used for many years now as part of the sidewalk project and has proved an effective method for limiting damage to the adjacent lawn and inconvenience to the residents while also being a cost saving measure for the property owners.

In order to begin the assessment and notification process, it is necessary for City Council to pass a Resolution of Necessity to require repair of sidewalks and driveway aprons located in designated areas of all four wards that have not already been repaired by the abutting property owners.

Notices are sent out to the affected property owners, giving them a minimum of 60 days in which to complete the replacement. The property owner has two options, either have the work completed prior to the end of the 60-day notice or have the city's contractor complete the work. Should the property owner have the city's contractor perform the work, payment is made via an invoice from the city or charged to the owner's property tax duplicate.

With this early notification, the property owner will have more than the 60-day time frame to complete the work, before the city's contractor begins work, if they so desire. Currently,

the city's contractor is anticipated to begin work sometime during the early summer.

Councilmember Pennington presented the first reading of this resolution.

- c. Ordinance to adopt new Chapter 926 and amend Section 925.07 of the Streets, Utilities and Public Services Code of Ordinance No. 166-84, the Codified Ordinances of Fairfield, Ohio.

The Code is periodically updated to apply modifications and regulatory requirements to ensure best practices and to conform to recent amendments in state and federal law. These amendments include provisions which update the City's storm water management plan and adopt new regulations prohibiting illicit discharges and connections which address Ohio EPA MS-4 General permit requirements.

Councilmember Pennington presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Debbie Pennington, seconded by Dale Paullus, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Debbie Pennington, seconded by Adam Kraft, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 5-26. APPROVED 6-0.

5. Finance & Budget - Councilmember Leslie Besl

- a. Ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 148-25 entitled "An Ordinance to make estimated appropriations for the expenses and other expenditures of the City of Fairfield, Ohio, during a period beginning January 1, 2026, and ending December 31, 2026."
- Contractual Appropriations: \$1,376,789 total (\$255,000 Sidewalk construction (Public Works); see below for additional amounts)

Councilmember Besl presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Leslie Besl, seconded by Dale Paullus, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Leslie Besl, seconded by Debbie Pennington, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 6-26. APPROVED 6-0.

\$243,564 - Contingency funds restored, Various projects (Public Utilities)

\$878,225 - Contingency funds restored; Marsh Park Master Plan, Phase 1 (Parks & Recreation)

- b. Ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 148-25 entitled "An Ordinance to make estimated appropriations for the expenses and other expenditures of the City of Fairfield, Ohio, during a period beginning January 1, 2026, and ending December 31, 2026."
- Non-Contractual Appropriations: \$327,050 total (see below for description)

Councilmember Besl presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Leslie

Besl, seconded by Adam Kraft, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Leslie Besl, seconded by Dale Paullus, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 7-26. APPROVED 6-0.

\$50,000 - Appropriation of partial funding for 2026 Grounds, Entryways & Landscaping Program (Public Works)

\$100,000 - Appropriation of funding for 2026 Annual Drainage Program (Public Works)

\$20,000 - Water Division - Professional and engineering services (Public Utilities)

\$24,350 - Water Division - Engineering services for the Seward Road Tanks Water Main Loop Project (Public Utilities)

\$20,000 - Water Division - Safety Equipment (Public Utilities)

\$20,000 - Wastewater Division - Safety Equipment (Public Utilities)

\$20,000 - Water Division - Electrical Equipment (Public Utilities)

\$20,000 - Wastewater Division - Electrical Equipment (Public Utilities)

\$37,700 - Wastewater Division - Manhole Castings (Public Utilities)

\$15,000 - Water Division - Valve Boxes and related items (Public Utilities)

Meeting Schedule

Monday, January 26: Council-Manager Briefing, 6:00 PM; Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM

Monday, February 9: Council-Manager Briefing, 6:00 PM; Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM

Monday, February 23: Council-Manager Briefing, 6:00 PM; Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM

Clerk Wilson read the meeting schedule.

Executive Session of Council (if Needed)

None.

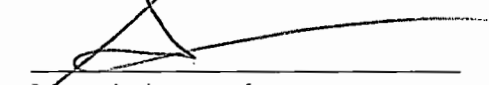
Adjournment

The Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council



Mayor's Approval

Date Approved: 1/26/20