

**City of Fairfield Minutes
Regular Meeting of City Council
January 26, 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

Councilmember Pennington 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 Matt Davidson

Councilmembers excused included:

Councilmember, At-Large Gwen Brill

Councilmember Meyers, seconded by Councilmember Davidson, moved to excuse Councilmember Brill. Motion carried 6-0.

Agenda Modifications

None.

Executive Session Requests

Councilmember Besl, seconded by Councilmember Paullus, moved for Executive Session to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official, the sale of property at competitive bidding, and to consider confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets, or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance. Roll call vote. Motion carried 6-0.

Special Presentations

None.

Citizen Comments

None.

Council Reports

Councilmember Kraft reported that the city's snow response includes public parking lots around the city and will include the paved trails as the week progresses. He also noted that the Parks & Recreation Department received the 31st Tree City and 8th growth awards.

Councilmember Meyers reminded residents to call non-emergency dispatch to report water main breaks.

Councilmember Besl asked what legally can be done at a level 2 snow emergency with cars on the street. Chief Maynard responded that he is not sure what level allows towing vehicles but that it would be difficult to tow that many throughout the city and that ticketing vehicle owners does not change the behavior. He stated that these measures are typically only used if the vehicle is creating a roadway hazard. He also said that the Police Department can run license plates and go ask the resident to move the vehicle if Public Work is having a hard time clearing the snow.

Mayor Miller suggested a social media campaign to ask for consideration by neighbors because he shares the same concerns. Public Work Director Ben Mann said that the City does post on social media to ask people to move cars and give room for plows and the response was a little better for this last snow event.

Public Hearing(s)

None.

Approval of Minutes

1. Regular Meeting Minutes - January 12, 2026

The Regular Meeting Minutes of January 12, 2026 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 Meyers presented the third reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Tim Meyers, seconded by Adam Kraft, moved to adopt.. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

Councilmember Meyers thanked the Minnick family for being small business owners in Fairfield and for their commitment to build homes in the City. Fred Minnick thanked the city for working with them.

ORDINANCE NO. 8-26 APPROVED 6-0.

2. Public Works - Councilmember Debbie Pennington

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

Councilmember Pennington presented the second reading of this resolution. She also thanked Public Works for their hard work to clear the snow from the storm and the sacrifice of the families while their loved one was working long shifts.

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. Parks & Recreation - Councilmember Adam Kraft

a. Resolution of the City of Fairfield, Ohio, supporting the Ohio Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial (America250-Ohio) and declaring an emergency.

The purpose of this resolution is to designate the City of Fairfield as one of the 250 official America 250 Communities in the State of Ohio, thereby encouraging participation in the statewide commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the United States in 2026 through educational, cultural, and civic activities that celebrate history, promote civic pride, and engage residents.

Becoming an officially-recognized community within the America 250-Ohio Commission will provide City leaders with opportunities to network, partner, and exchange information with the state commission team in an effort to celebrate and commemorate this historic anniversary.

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

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

2. Finance & Budget - Councilmember Leslie Besl

a. Ordinance to establish salaries and hourly rates for certain salaried and hourly employees of the City of Fairfield, Ohio and to authorize and limit the numbers and types of certain employees, to repeal Ordinance No. 93-25 and all amendments thereto and to declare an emergency.

The collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with the FOP Union, Patrol Officers and Supervisors, has been settled, and new rates went into effect April 1, 2025. The wages on the Ordinance reflect a 3.6% base wage increase effective 4/1/2025, a 2.5% base wage increase effective 4/1/2026 and a 2.5% base wage increase effective 4/1/2027. Additional

lump sum amounts were negotiated each year of the contract as well.

Ohioans passed a constitutional amendment in 2006 which provided that increases to the State minimum wage every year would be based on the Consumer Price Index. The increase to \$11.00 per hour is effective January 1, 2026.

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. 9-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- b. Ordinance adjusting the Unclassified Service Pay Plan/Position List and establishing salaries for certain exempt and salaried employees of the City of Fairfield, Ohio; repealing Ordinance No. 7-25 and all amendments thereto; and declaring an emergency.

Pay Grades and Pay Ranges for the Unclassified Service Pay Plan/Position List were updated in 2023 following a comprehensive review of internal and external comparable position wages, considerations of compression within Department bargaining and non-bargaining personnel wages, and an analysis of historical inflation data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics Midwest Consumer Price Index. Pay Grades were compressed from 14 to 7 and minimum and maximum salaries were established in the new Pay Grades. Council authorized further review and update of the plan every three years.

Consistent with Council's directive, a 2026 review of the plan has been completed, and an analysis of the resulting data indicates that economic trends, market alignment, internal parity, union wage adjustments and compression considerations warrant an adjustment of the minimum and maximum salaries in each Pay Grade and to re-align the percentage between the minimums and maximums. These adjustments are expected to increase the supply of candidates, increase selection rates of qualified applicants, maintain productivity, incentivize performance-based behaviors and decrease unwanted employee turnover.

The position title of Chief of Staff is added to the Position List in anticipation that a current position will be reclassified to clarify and re-define job duties and responsibilities. Funding is not requested.

Councilmember Besl presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Leslie Besl, seconded by Tim Meyers, 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. 10-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- c. Ordinance to amend Sections 163.19 and 163.20 of Chapter 163, Employee Provisions, of the Codified Ordinances of Fairfield, Ohio and declaring an emergency.

Codified Ordinances 163.19 and 163.20 provide certain management and supervisory/professional employees with additional benefits that are not otherwise provided to non-management employees. One such benefit, found in 163.19 (f) and 163.20 (c), is reimbursement for up to fifty percent (50%) of the actual expense for the cost of a single membership in a health club. These provisions were effective 3-26-2018 and 4-8-2019, respectively. The passage of time and inflation have contributed to the increasing costs of health club memberships. By way of example, the current cost of a single membership at the YMCA is \$57.52, including tax, or \$690.24 per year. The YMCA plans to increase its membership fees in 2026. The average fee for other local Health Club memberships is approximately \$65.00 per month. Due to the current cap of \$250.00, the 50% reimbursement of the membership cost is not achieved and will likely never be achieved, since health club membership fees do not ordinarily decrease.

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 Tim Meyers, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 11-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- d. Ordinance to adopt new Section 163.21, Paid Parental Leave, of Ordinance No. 166-84, the Codified Ordinances of Fairfield, Ohio, and declare an emergency.

There are currently no mandatory Federal or State paid parental leave laws. Numerous studies have been conducted that recognize key benefits of paid parental leave, including Improved Family Health & Well-being, Economic & Workforce Advantages and Support of Family Stability. There has been action on the local level to adopt Ordinances and/or Policies granting some form of paid parental leave. Fifteen (15) Ohio municipalities and counties now provide some form of paid maternity/paternity or parental leave, including: Beachwood, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Cuyahoga County, Dayton, Franklin County, Lucas County, Middletown, Newburgh Heights, Oberlin, City of Montgomery, Summit County, West Chester and Upper Arlington. Benefits range from two (2) weeks of paid leave up to twelve (12) weeks in the cities of Cincinnati and Montgomery. The City of Hamilton has a pending draft proposal establishing two (2) weeks of paid maternity and paternity leave at 100%. The City of Westerville is likewise considering updating its leave policies to include some form of paid parental leave. The addition of a paid parental leave provision to Chapter 163 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Fairfield will improve employee retention, job satisfaction, productivity, and it is a unique benefit that will help attract talent in today's competitive market.

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. 12-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- e. 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: \$12,733 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 Tim Meyers, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-26. APPROVED 6-0.

\$12,733 - Speed detection equipment (Police)

Meeting Schedule

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

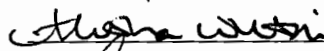
Executive Session of Council (if Needed)

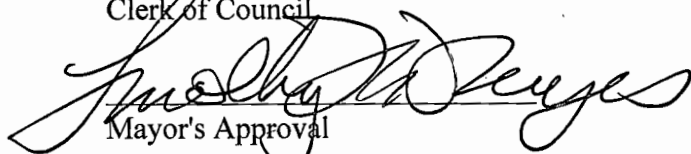
Council recessed to Executive Session at 7:18 PM.

Adjournment

The Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

ATTEST:


Clerk of Council


Mayor's Approval
Date Approved: 2/19/26