



The City of Wickliffe

City Council Meeting Minutes June 9th, 2025

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, a regular meeting of Wickliffe City Council was called to order by Council President Ed Levon on Monday, June 9th, 2025 at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers at Wickliffe City Hall.

The following were present at **Roll Call**:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Council President | Edward Levon |
| Council Members | Bala, Gerhardstein, Jaworski, Koski, Thielman |
| Mayor | Joseph Sakacs |
| Law Director | Jeremy Iosue |
| Finance Director | Chondra Hunter |
| Service Director | Dave Krofcheck |
| Building Commissioner | Ray Sack |
| Recreation Director | Timothy Stopp |
| Police Chief | Jonathon Bush |
| Fire Chief | Christopher Grossman |

Excused: Councilperson Salotto, Engineer Peter J. Formica

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, that the minutes of the Wickliffe City Council Meeting of May 19, 2025 be approved as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

Yes: Bala, Gerhardstein, Jaworski, Koski, Levon, Salotto, Thielman

Abstain: Salotto

No: None

Motion carried. **May 19, 2025 meeting minutes approved.**

Reports and Communications from Mayor/Safety Director

Mayor Sakacs read his written report.

There were no questions for the Mayor.

Reports and Communications from Director of Law

Law Director Iosue had no report.

There were no questions for the Mayor.

Reports and Communications from Council President

Council President Levon had no Reports or Communications.

Additions or Amendments to Agenda

Mayor Sakacs requested "Fencing at Detention Pond at Loreto Development" be added to the agenda under New Business. Council President Levon added this item to New Business as Item C.

Councilperson Gerhardstein asked that "Short Term Rentals" be added to the agenda in New Business. Council President Levon added this item to New Business as Item D.

Councilperson Koski asked that "Council Attendance" be added to New Business. Council President Levon added this item to New Business as Item E.

Administrators

A. *Police Chief (Bush) Written Report Submitted*

Chief Bush noted he wished to speak regarding Next Gen 911. He noted packets should have been sent to all from the Next Gen 911 Committee, and there will be legislation at the next meeting asking Council to support what the committee has planned. Chief Bush noted he is “in complete deference” to the Committee’s plan. He noted the Committee is requiring a minimum of two dispatchers at all times. He noted this requirement will cost the City additional funds, as he will be required to hire additional dispatchers, pay more overtime, and train more people. He noted the State determined that one dispatcher is sufficient, but Lake County (the only county in the state that he is aware of) wants to require two dispatchers. He noted this is against the better interest of the City and will cost more money. He noted we usually have two dispatchers working simultaneously, however occasionally there is only one, and if so it is usually after 3:00 AM. He noted the Committee’s response was that the City should hire additional part time employees, to which he responded that he will likely be unable to hire dispatchers to work only late nights/early mornings. He noted we get by fine. The committee believes once the conversion is made to the new system, we will not be okay. NextGen 911 is cell phone calls. Currently all cell calls go through Lake County dispatch, then are transferred to the correct City. The new system will allow us to handle our own cell phone calls. He noted there is funding attached to this, so when it transfers, Wickliffe and all the other municipalities will receive the funding instead of the County. The Chief was unsure when this would go into effect as the State is not ready to go yet. Wickliffe is ready, with the exception of some equipment that has already been paid for.

Councilperson Koski asked if the amount of money coming in would cover the cost of the additional dispatcher. Chief Bush noted it would not. The funds Wickliffe may receive will likely be around \$30,000.00 - \$35,000.00 per year. He was told that the County receives approximately \$500,000.00 per year from the State to operate 911, which involves answering the call and transferring it to the correct City. They will lose this income when NextGen 911 becomes operational.

Councilperson Gerhardstein asked, under whose authority does the Committee have the right to mandate the requirement of two dispatchers. Chief Bush noted he thinks possibly the State of Ohio granted them this when they enacted the law to create this six person committee. Mr. Gerhardstein noted it seems that this committee is made up of the same or similar people who re-vamped the Local Government Fund which took several hundred thousand dollars from our budget. He finds it ironic that the same people have decided each community must have two dispatchers which they are not going to pay for.

Councilperson Jaworski asked if Chief Bush could estimate the increase in the number of calls that might be added. Chief Bush noted he is unaware, as the County has not provided this information. He added they have said they are screening the calls and only sending the important calls. He noted he and some other chiefs made a trip to Erie, PA where they have been running NextGen 911 for over a year. In Erie, the staff noted it runs smoother, not harder, and there was not an uptick of calls. Mr. Jaworski asked if this technology is based off GPS location/triangulation. Chief Bush noted it is, and the City will be geofenced. He also noted they are working with Willowick to form a plan regarding sharing of a dispatch center. He noted when Council votes on this, it has to pass by sixty percent (60%) population [of the population of the County] in order to pass. He noted our population isn’t anywhere near Mentor or other townships. He noted he is unsure how this will turn out. Mr. Jaworski noted he doesn’t care what happens, he will not support this if Chief Bush is not in support of it. Chief Bush noted all the area chiefs do not support it as it is not feasible, costing a lot of money that is not necessary. He noted he would have to hire additional dispatchers and potentially have three on duty occasionally, and the third would likely be doing nothing.

There were no additional questions or comments for the Police Chief.

B. *Fire Chief (Grossman) Written Report Submitted*

Chief Grossman noted he had nothing to add.

Councilperson Gerhardstein asked if the “stop work order” had been rescinded on Sunset Development. Chief Grossman noted it has not been lifted yet. He noted they made significant progress last week. He was expecting a call today to note that they had completed the remaining items. He did not receive the call. He believes the wait now is due to Lake County Water, who needs to do a test to fulfill the requirements. Councilperson Gerhardstein asked for clarification that LCDW is the one who is holding this up. The Chief stated the fire main needs to be turned on and LCW handles the final testing; they have a specific test/procedures they must perform. It is his understanding that the line is full of water and is

under pressure, but it is shut off from a supply point. Once this is complete, the water will be turned on and all will be good. They have completed the other stipulation, the access road.

There were no additional questions or comments for the Fire Chief.

C. *Finance Director (Hunter) Written Report Submitted*

Finance Director Hunter noted May is now closed and the General Fund Carry Over is approximately \$7.6 Million.

There were no questions or comments for the Finance Director.

D. *Engineer (Formica) Written Report Submitted*

Engineer Formica was excused.

There were no questions or comments for the Engineer.

E. *Service Director (Krofcheck) Written Report Submitted*

Service Director Krofcheck wished to recognize Mike Palgut, a Service Department employee who ran this morning in support of the Special Olympic Torch Run.

Councilperson Jaworski noted he received phone calls regarding potholes on side streets. Service Director Krofcheck noted they are working on Rockefeller and the main streets in order to get street striping done earlier. They have had a few days of what they call "throw and go" where they load up on asphalt and work as much as they can. They have completed Weber, Norman, and the west side of Lloyd. They do address holes as they are reported. Mr. Jaworski asked if they are working on the worst streets or working wherever. Mr. Krofcheck noted the focus is Rockefeller and others as they are reported. Mr. Jaworski asked when Rockefeller would be complete and focus would move to the side streets. Mr. Krofcheck noted he believes Rockefeller could be complete by the end of the week, weather dependent. If residents notice potholes, they should contact the Service Department.

Councilperson Bala wished to pass along some good comments. He noted that he has received comments regarding the ball fields. It was stated they are in the best shape they have ever been and whoever is taking care of the fields is doing an excellent job. The Service Director will pass along the compliment.

Councilperson Gerhardstein inquired regarding new road construction, specifically, when a road has been refinished, who is responsible for restoring the crosswalks and stop bars. Mr. Gerhardstein mentioned Richard Court, Gary Court, Robert west, noting they are still not complete from last year. Mr. Krofcheck noted he will need to revisit the bid to determine if it was the responsibility of the contractor. He noted he will look into this matter. He also noted the Service Department can also take care of them, and they have already done a few.

Mr. Gerhardstein also noted he and Council President Levon have been working to get the water department to come out to repair the multiple locations in the city that have yet to be fixed. They have also been working to get the guardrails repaired. Mr. Krofcheck noted he spoke with Matt, who is the head of the concrete crew for the water department. One repair on Mapledale has been completed, but the weather has been an issue. Many of the repairs are concrete. Mr. Krofcheck noted the answer he continues to hear is that they will get there. Mr. Gerhardstein noted they have not been able to get a response from the County. Mayor Sakacs noted he spoke to Commissioner Plecnik last week, who said that it should be getting worked out. They Mayor's other concern is the guardrail at Lloyd, which is in front of Lubrizol, a Fortune 500 company. The Mayor reported Mr. Plecnik spoke with the County Engineer and specified Wickliffe needs to be at the top of the list, as this has been going on a long time. The Engineer noted the police departments needs to pursue those who hit the guardrails. The Mayor noted Wickliffe does, however, often it is a hit and run situation and the person is unknown. Mr. Gerhardstein noted he and Council President Levon received an email from the Engineer that the guardrail incident is so new that they have been unable to attain the police report on it. They Mayor noted he will follow up, as it is not new. Mr. Krofcheck noted he put in a request for repair in the fall. Councilperson Jaworski noted this is a significant safety concern. The Mayor has suggested our Service Department price it out and make the repair, then bill the County, since this has not been taken care of. Mr. Gerhardstein noted the email did state that this is a significant safety concern. Council President Levon noted they also offered to repair the water break areas and request reimbursement, but have not received an answer.

There were no further questions or comments for the Service Director.

F. *Building Commissioner (Sack) Written Report Submitted*

Building Commissioner Sack noted the sewers are being connected and the foundations are being prepared for the three new homes in the Old School development. He added it is going well, the street is clean, etc.

Councilperson Gerhardstein inquired regarding the collection of fees from the gaming establishment in Wickliffe. He noticed in the Building Department report that it seemed lower. Mr. Sack explained that one came in on time and the other was received the following day, which meant it will show up on next month's report.

There were no additional questions or comments for the Building Commissioner.

G. *Recreation Director (Stopp) Written Report Submitted*

Recreation Director Stopp noted the Mayor "stole some of his thunder". He stated the Recreation Department is in full swing. This year was the 20th Anniversary of the Green Ridge Golf Outing. There were forty-four paid golfers this past Saturday. Summer Camp began today and they were dodging raindrops. We are still a few full-time lifeguards short. They are filling in with part-timers and substitutes. He added a reminder about the concerts at Jindra tomorrow and Coulby on Friday.

Councilperson Jaworski asked if the lifeguard situation will lead to altered pool hours. Mr. Stopp noted it may affect the lazy river, as that area requires a number of guards. This is a day-by-day assessment.

There were no additional questions or comments for the Recreation Director.

Audience Participation

Council President Levon opened Audience Participation to those in attendance at 7:24 PM.

He noted this portion of the meeting is intended for the audience to address the Council and Mayor, not the directors. Anyone wishing to address Council must use the microphone, as the meetings are being streamed on YouTube; they must be acknowledged and give their name and address for the clerk's record and will be given a five-minute maximum for their comments.

Terry Lazar, the owner of a business at 30030 Lakeland Boulevard, noted he is in the process of building a new building on Lakeland Boulevard. He applied for a tax abatement for the new building back in March. He was wondering what the status is of this application. Mr. Levon noted it is on tonight's agenda and Mayor Sakacs added that it is for Stanley Steemer and Premier Development. Mr. Lazar noted they cannot begin construction until the application has been considered. They are very close to beginning, and it has been over two and a half months.

After multiple calls inquiring if anyone would like to address Wickliffe City Council and there being no reply, Council President Levon closed Audience Participation at 7:26 PM.

Committee Reports

There were no Committee Reports.

Commission Reports

The report from the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting of May 22nd, 2025 was presented by Councilperson Gerhardstein. *Written Report Submitted*

Councilperson Jaworski reported on the June 5, 2025 Planning Commission and Architectural Review Board Meeting, noting a discussion was held to approve a parking lot plan and construction addition at 1470 East 289th Street in an Industrial District. Both items were approved.

Old Business

There was no Old Business.

New Business

A. Liquor License Transfer for Legends Bar & Lounge

The license that was held by Grumpys Enterprises, DBA Grumpys, 29137 Euclid Avenue 1st FL, Wickliffe, Ohio 44092 is being transferred to Legends Bar & Lounge LLC, DBA Grumpys Lounge, 29137 Euclid Avenue 1st FL, Wickliffe, Ohio 44092. This business is in Ward 2. Council President Levon instructed the Ward Councilperson to inform the Clerk if there were any objections to the transfer. Mr. Gerhardstein noted there were no objections.

B. CRA Tax Abatement (Mayor)

Mayor Sakacs received an email from Assistant Finance Director Terry Ness regarding the receipt of a CRA Tax Abatement from Premier Development for the property at 29801 Euclid Avenue. He asked that this item be placed into the appropriate committee for discussion. Council President Levon added these items to the Committee of the Whole for further discussion.

C. Fencing at Detention Pond at Loreto Old School Property (Mayor)

Mayor Sakacs received a phone call from a resident and the Fire Chief regarding the detention pond at the Old School property. The concern was the proximity of the edge of the pond to the edge of the Library parking lot. There was no fence and it is a significant drop (approximately twenty feet). The Mayor noted Councilperson Jaworski did bring up this concern at a previous Planning Commission meeting. The developer noted it is not common practice to put a fence around a detention pond. The Mayor noted he spoke to the Director of the Wickliffe Public Library who is planning to put up a fence that will surround the library, however, they are unable to do so until the fall. The Mayor then spoke to Loreto Iafelice, who agreed to put in a five foot black chain link fence temporarily. Mr. Jaworski thanked the Mayor for recognizing his concern; he noted that other members of the Planning Commission did not share his concern. Councilperson Gerhardstein asked the Mayor what the concern was. The Mayor noted the concern was children at the library being curious. Chief Grossman noted his concern was the steep grade and the amount of water that was in the pond. He noted it would be difficult for an adult to ascend the grade. He also noted the library has many summer programs and there are many children in what used to be a playground area. He agreed with Mr. Jaworski when this was brought up at Planning Commission.

D. Short Term Rentals (Gerhardstein)

Councilperson Gerhardstein noted Mayfield Heights and Eastlake have passed legislation prohibiting short-term rentals in their cities. He inquired if Council might discuss this topic and consider similar legislation. Currently there is one in Wickliffe, and there have been multiple noise complaints. Mr. Gerhardstein has acquired the ordinance from Mayfield Heights as an example. Building Commissioner Sack noted he has sent five or six cease and desist orders with regard to short term rentals here, as there have been complaints. He fully supports legislation to prohibit this. He is using the requirement for an occupancy permit to administer the cease and desist. Mayor Sakacs noted he has a meeting this week with a gentleman who has information regarding the topic of companies purchasing properties and turning them into rentals. The Law Director and Building Commissioner will also attend the meeting. Mr. Jaworski noted he has conversed with the Law Director regarding the topic of the large companies coming in to purchase properties. The Mayor noted the "flip side" is that the City cannot stipulate who a resident can sell their home to, especially since the big companies are paying over market value. Mr. Gerhardstein noted the Mayfield Heights legislation requires rentals to be no less than thirty days. Council President Levon asked Councilperson Gerhardstein if he had any issues with the Mayfield Heights legislation, and Mr. Gerhardstein noted he has no issues with it. Mr. Gerhardstein will work with the clerk to email it to all. Mr. Levon added this topic to the Committee of the Whole.

E. Council Attendance (Koski)

Councilperson Koski noted she has had four residents contact her to inquire if Council has an attendance policy and whether absences affect the pay of the absentee. These residents watch the YouTube recording and Ms. Koski would like to be able to address their concern. Council President Levon noted that it is a salaried position and, like any salaried position, one is paid whether or not they are in attendance. He noted this is based on the Charter. The residents feel it is unfair to pay for excessive absences. Mr. Levon noted any suggested changes would need to go to the voters. Councilperson Jaworski noted the Charter denotes after three consecutive unexcused absences, Council would have the opportunity to remove an individual from the body.

Ordinances

OR2025-24 *By Title Only* An ordinance authorizing the Mayor of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio to enter into a contract with Verdantas LLC for the purpose of professional consulting services (City Engineer) **THIRD READING**

Motion by Thielman, seconded by Bala, that Ordinance 2025-24 be adopted as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

Yes: Bala, Gerhardstein, Jaworski, Koski, Levon, Thielman

No: None

Motion carried. **Ordinance 2025-24 adopted.**

OR2025-25 *By Title Only* An ordinance establishing the receipting of adult use cannabis funds **THIRD READING**

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, that Ordinance 2025-25 be adopted as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

Yes: Bala, Gerhardstein, Jaworski, Koski, Levon, Thielman

No: None

Motion carried. **Ordinance 2025-25 adopted.**

OR2025-27 *By Title Only* An ordinance amending Section 1521.99 Penalty of Chapter 1521 Open Burning of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio **SECOND READING**

OR2025-28 AMENDED *By Title Only* An ordinance amending Sections of Chapter 1323 Fences of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio **SECOND READING**

Councilperson Gerhardstein wished to clarify the AMENDED portion of the ordinance. He noted there was clarification on the topic of gates after a discussion at the previous council meeting, adding a gate is only necessary on the new fence.

OR2025-29 *By Title Only* An ordinance amending Section 171.01 Bonds of Chapter 171 Employment Provisions the Codified Ordinances of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio **SECOND READING**

OR2025-30 *By Title Only* An ordinance amending the City of Wickliffe Zone Map referred to in Section 1341.80 of the Wickliffe Codified Ordinances rezoning one parcel owned by Loreto Davis Lincoln, LLC in Wickliffe, Ohio **SECOND READING**

OR2025-31 *By Title Only* An ordinance levying assessments for unpaid delinquent sewer amounts upon parcels of land in the City of Wickliffe, Ohio **SECOND READING**

OR2025-32 *By Title Only* An ordinance enacting Section 533.17 Sex Offender Residency Prohibition in Chapter 533 Obscenity and Sex Offenses of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio **FIRST READING**

Resolutions

There were no Resolutions.

Other Legislation

There was no Other Legislation.

Miscellaneous

Mayor Sakacs noted he forgot to mention that the five year capital plan has been completed and would like to know if it is possible to call a committee meeting on June 16th to discuss this topic and to have a discussion regarding the ladder truck. Council President Levon added Five Year Capital Plan to the Finance Committee for discussion.

Mr. Levon noted earlier in the meeting he added the CRA Applications for Stanley Steemer and Premier Development to the Committee of the Whole. He noted he will change the designation to the Finance Committee for this topic. He then called for a meeting of the Finance Committee on Monday, June 16th at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers to discuss the Stanley Steemer and Premier Development CRAs and the Five Year Capital Plan, to be followed by a meeting of the Committee of the Whole to discuss Short Term Rentals.

Council President Levon also wished to remind all that the Tax Budget Public Hearing will be held at 6:45 PM on Monday, June 23rd. This is prior to the regular Council Meeting to be held at 7:00 that evening.

Adjournment

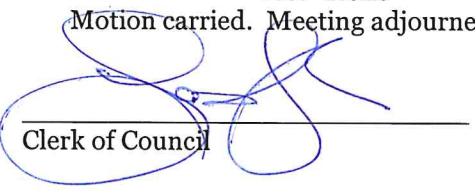
Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, to adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call:

Yes: Bala, Gerhardstein, Jaworski, Koski, Levon, Thielman

No: None

Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM.


Clerk of Council
Council President and Presiding Officer