



Following the Pledge of Allegiance, a regular meeting of Wickliffe City Council was called to order by Council President Ed Levon on Monday, June 23rd, 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, Salotto, Thielman
Mayor	Joseph Sakacs
Law Director	Jeremy Iosue
Finance Director	Chlondra Hunter
Engineer	Peter J. Formica
Service Director	Dave Krofcheck
Building Commissioner	Ray Sack
Recreation Director	Timothy Stopp
Police Chief	Jonathon Bush
Fire Chief	Christopher Grossman

Excused: None

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Levon, seconded by Thielman, to allow Councilperson Salotto to abstain from voting on the minutes of the Wickliffe City Council Meeting of June 9, 2025.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion Carried.

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, that the minutes of the Wickliffe City Council Meeting of June 9, 2025 be approved as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

Abstain: Salotto

No: None

Motion carried. **June 9, 2025 meeting minutes approved.**

Reports and Communications from Mayor/Safety Director

Mayor Sakacs read his written report.

Councilperson Bala asked if the truck lease was for Amazon trucks again. Mayor Sakacs noted it is. Mr. Bala asked if Amazon might be looking at purchasing the land. The Mayor noted it is always a possibility; they were interested a few years ago, but did not want to deal with the demolition. Since that has been dealt with, he believes it is now possible. He also noted when the current Amazon facility in Euclid was still Euclid Square Mall, Amazon parked their trucks there. He noted they are showing interest and he is hoping! Councilperson Salotto asked how long the lease is, and the Mayor responded it is three months, with the possibility of nine months. Ms. Salotto asked if there were issues; the Mayor responded it was a concern in the past. He noted there were some complaints. Councilperson Gerhardstein noted it is not zoned industrial, rather it is Commercial-Manufacturing. He will ask tonight if the wording of this can be clarified, as it is vague. He noted a "truck depot" brings nothing into the city. The Mayor noted he spoke to Premier and they do not see why this is an issue, as it is a pre-existing, permitted use. He asked if they would be grandfathered in if any new legislation was put into place. Mr. Iosue noted they would be grandfathered in if there was a lease in place at the time legislation was passed. Premier's lawyers are adamant they are allowed to do this. They are

attempting to do business/make a bit of money during the demo. The Mayor does not see an issue. Mr. Gerhardstein noted he is putting it into committee so Council will have the option to change the wording as it is very vague. The Mayor did not see an issue with trucks parking in lot when they are empty. Mr. Gerhardstein noted he would like Council to discuss the wording. Councilperson Salotto noted she would like to look at the bigger picture: what we are trying to do with the land. She believes the aim is to develop that land to bring in tax dollars. She noted this is an issue as we want to bring businesses in. We are working with a company that is doing something for us by tearing down the building. They need to market the property and present something someone would want to purchase. If they are trying to help Amazon, why would we go out of our way to step in the way of that – we focus on small things instead of looking at the big picture – and she does not understand.

Reports and Communications from Director of Law

Law Director Iosue had no report.

He noted Item F under Ordinances has been amended and is on Emergency at this meeting.

Reports and Communications from Council President

Council President Levon had no Reports or Communications.

Additions or Amendments to Agenda

Councilperson Gerhardstein asked that three topics be added to New Business:

- A. Chapter 1151 Fire Limits
- B. House Bill 86
- C. Trailer Parking

Council President Levon added these three topics to New Business as Items A, B, and C, respectively.

Administrators

A. Police Chief (Bush)

Chief Bush noted they did begin to advertise for the dispatcher position. That position will not be open until 2026, but they are attempting to get someone hired and trained before that person leaves.

Councilperson Gerhardstein inquired if the Police Department is still looking to fill the one open position for patrolman in his department. Chief Bush noted he can look at lateral transfers, but he has not advertised for this yet. He noted the current list expires at the end of July and has been exhausted. After August 1st he can offer another test, and plans to do so. Mr. Gerhardstein noted the department is one person short due to a deployment and one additionally. Chief Bush noted this is correct.

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

B. Fire Chief (Grossman)

Chief Grossman had nothing to add to his previous report.

There were no questions or comments for the Fire Chief.

C. Finance Director (Hunter)

Finance Director Hunter noted she will continue to watch House Bill 335 regarding the elimination of inside millage; they plan to advocate against it. She believes if this were to pass this year, it would have about a one million dollar impact on the City.

There were no questions or comments for the Finance Director.

D. Engineer (Formica) Written Report Submitted

Engineer Formica noted he had no additions to his written report.

Councilperson Jaworski asked if everything is in line for early July regarding the Ridge Road construction. Mr. Formica noted they received a question form a contractor last week, but all is moving along as planned.

There were no further questions or comments for the Engineer.

E. *Service Director (Krofcheck)*

Service Director Krofcheck had no additions to his previously submitted written report.

Councilperson Koski if all the playgrounds have been mulched. Mr. Krofcheck noted not all are complete yet, but they will be finished soon.

Ms. Koski also asked about the duck who resides at the Service Department. Mr. Krofcheck noted residents donated a few ducks to the City a few years ago. They are transferred to the pond each summer, however they make their way back to the shed which is their home – there were four, but only one remains and he does not like the pond. They are cared for in the shed at the old garage.

Councilperson Gerhardtstein received a call regarding the garbage trucks. On Bridle Path, a resident called regarding the island. The split rail fence that was there is now gone, and the trucks are ruining that area. He asked if there is anything we can do. Mr. Krofcheck noted the hydrant was moved, and the big city trucks get around it ok. He will look into it.

Councilperson Jaworski inquired regarding who would be responsible for monitoring trash receptacles that remain after garbage pick up, asking if this is “patrolled” or if it is based on resident calls. Mr. Krofcheck noted it is mostly resident calls. Occasionally the cans are moved up into the driveway; other times a citation is written.

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

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

Building Commissioner Sack noted the model homes on Lincoln have been framed; this is coming along fine. He stated the OLA sign was being installed today.

Councilperson Koski asked when OLA will be up and running. Mayor Sakacs noted he was informed it should be July, but it will be open by August 1st.

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

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

Recreation Director Stopp noted the second movie night was last Friday. The rain finally cleared and the event was able to go on as scheduled. On the lifeguard front: good news – we are pretty much there! There were additional certification classes and the electronic signs were helpful. We are in a good spot, so everything should be up and running.

Council President Levon noted he spoke to Mr. Stopp after the first concert in the park, which had very low attendance. He believes we need to do a much better job of promoting/advertising these concerts and other city events. He asked if there were any other ideas to help with this. He suggested a postcard or magnet that is mailed to all Wickliffe homes that would include all the events for the summer/year. He was discouraged by the attendance, though he did note the weather was not optimal.

Councilperson Koski noted the pools have been very crowded due to the very warm weather. She asked if there was a maximum capacity. Mr. Stopp noted we have enough square footage to accommodate the possible 400 people that would be the maximum. She also spoke to the pool manager, as, due to the crowds, it was very loud. She is suggesting old fashioned megaphones for the guards. She noted people could not hear a whistle or the shouting. Mr. Levon noted he was there and did not believe the volume was an issue.

Mayor Sakacs noted the Band Intense has a good following, he believes this was due to the bad weather. Mr. Stopp noted a portable sign is also placed on the front lawn to advertise to all the Ridge Road traffic. We are open to suggestions. Mayor Sakacs likes the postcard idea, as does Mr. Levon. Mr. Levon was concerned regarding the food trucks who did not do well with such a small crowd.

Councilman Jaworski asked how the golf course was doing. Mr. Stopp noted they are currently just a bit behind last year's pace due to wet weather, but it is picking up. Mr. Jaworski asked about the condition of the course. Mr. Stopp noted it is doing well due to the rain.

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

Audience Participation

Council President Levon opened Audience Participation to those in attendance at 7:22 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.

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 7:23 PM.

Committee Reports

- A. The report from the Finance Committee meeting of June 16th, 2025 was presented by Council President Levon. *Written Report Submitted*
- B. The report from the Committee of the Whole meeting of June 16th, 2025 was presented by Council President Levon. *Written Report Submitted*

Commission Reports

There were no Commission Reports.

Old Business

There was no Old Business.

New Business

A. CH 1151 Fire Limits

Councilperson Gerhardstein stated there was an issue last week. He noted this ordinance was passed in 1948, and states that any building built within two hundred feet of the center line of Euclid Avenue has to be built 100% waterproof and fireproof. He noted this is direct conflict with what Council passed last year with all the changes to the rezoning along the Euclid Avenue Corridor. So this does not come up again, he recommends that Council approve to eliminate CH 1151 of the Codified Ordinances, as it is outdated for what we are doing today.

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Jaworski, to authorize the Law Director to create legislation to remove CH 1151 from the Codified Ordinances of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried.

B. HB 86

Councilperson Gerhardstein corrected himself noting the topic should be Senate Bill (not House Bill) 86. He asked Chief Bush to explain this topic.

Chief Bush noted it was passed by the Senate and is currently in the House for consideration. Basically, it combats the "near marijuana" items that are currently for sale in Ohio and which are problematic. There are currently no laws prohibiting the sale of THC and lower levels of such. He noted the following points: it will require intoxicating hemp products to be sold only in dispensaries which only cater to customers age twenty-one and older, it will classify intoxicating hemp as anything inhaled or ingested with more than a specified amount of THC per package. These items will be taxed and the funds will go to the state. It will also allow breweries and other licensed retailers to sell beverages containing specific amounts of THC.

Finally, and one of the most important to the chief, is that it will criminalize driving under the influence of this product and having open containers of beverages containing this product. Currently there is no law against this now.

Councilperson Gerhardstein noted this is one of the reasons so many smoke shops are opening up, as they are allowed to sell these products.

We only have one dispensary in the city, but one of the smoke shops believed they were a “dispensary” as they were selling these products. This has been taken care of and their sign has been removed. They are one of many who are selling these products in the city and many are selling to kids.

Mr. Gerhardstein noted he and the Chief worked with the Clerk to create letters for Council and the Mayor to sign which will be sent to Representative Dan Troy denoting our position on this topic. If all are in agreement, there is a letter for all to sign, and if some choose not to sign the group letter, there are individual letters for each to sign following the meeting.

C. Trailer Parking

Councilperson Gerhardstein noted he wishes to put this into committee to clean up the language in our ordinances regarding parking lots and outdoor storage, semi parking, and truck depots. He stated he believes our current ordinances are too vague, as when he and Councilperson Thielman received complaints, they were unable to answer the resident’s concerns. He noted truck parking is not specifically outlined and he would like Council to discuss this and clarify what is and what is not allowed, cleaning it up to make it easier to understand.

Councilperson Thielman agreed with Councilperson Gerhardstein that the area in question is zoned Commercial Manufacturing not Industrial, and truck terminals are not allowed in that area, and he believes this area is being used as a truck terminal. He noted if it is labelled outside storage, this is not permitted as a business within itself, rather it is ancillary to another business operation. He noted he would be okay with a short-term lease, but he does not want to approve outside storage without screening or truck terminals in Commercial Manufacturing zones. He believes that use should be restricted to an Industrial zone, noting this is why there are Industrial zones. The zoning is different for this purpose.

Mayor Sakacs noted a truck terminal is a facility where trucks are loaded and unloaded, parked, and sometimes maintained. He noted, currently, the trailers that are parked there are empty. He believes there is a difference.

Councilperson Thielman noted there is nuance in the language which needs to be “cleaned up” regarding the definitions of truck terminal and trailer storage. He noted the ordinance book has a long list of definitions that need to be further defined for the future.

Councilperson Gerhardstein noted our ordinances state parking lots are for businesses that reside in the buildings that are there. In the case of the parked trailers, there were no businesses in the building across the street that were using those vehicles. He stated that, for or against, our ordinances are too vague and need to be cleaned up, one way or the other.

Councilperson Thielman noted that if the businesses are using the area as an outdoor storage yard, that is not permitted in Commercial Manufacturing, and, theoretically, when the building on Euclid Avenue comes down, they could park trucks there all day long and it would be allowed. He does not think this is correct and should not be allowed.

Council President Levon noted it will not be a problem to put this topic into committee for discussion. He added Trailer Parking to the Committee of the Whole.

Ordinances

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 **THIRD READING**

Motion by Koski, seconded by Bala, that Ordinance 2025-27 be adopted as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. **Ordinance 2025-27 adopted.**

OR2025-28 AMENDED *By Title Only* An ordinance amending Section 1323.09 Permit Required of Chapter 1323 Fences the Codified Ordinances of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio **THIRD READING**

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, that Ordinance 2025-28 AMENDED be adopted as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. **Ordinance 2025-28 AMENDED adopted.**

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 **THIRD READING**

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, that Ordinance 2025-29 be adopted as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. **Ordinance 2025-29 adopted.**

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 **THIRD READING**

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, that Ordinance 2025-30 be adopted as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. **Ordinance 2025-30 adopted.**

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

Motion by Salotto, seconded by Bala, that Ordinance 2025-31 be adopted as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. **Ordinance 2025-31 adopted.**

OR2025-32 AMENDED *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; and declaring an emergency (E) ***This Emergency Ordinance was requested to replace the original ordinance which would have been on SECOND READING at this meeting.***

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Salotto, the rules of Wickliffe City Council be suspended and Ordinance 2025-32 AMENDED be placed on third and final reading.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, that Ordinance 2025-32 AMENDED be adopted as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. **Ordinance 2025-32 AMENDED adopted.**

OR2025-33 *By Title Only* An ordinance providing appropriations for current expenses and other expenditures of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio for the period beginning January 1, 2025 and ending December 31, 2025; and declaring an emergency (E)

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Thielman, the rules of Wickliffe City Council be suspended and Ordinance 2025-33 be placed on third and final reading.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Salotto, seconded by Bala, that Ordinance 2025-33 be adopted as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. **Ordinance 2025-33 adopted.**

OR2025-34 *By Title Only* An ordinance authorizing the Director of Finance of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio to transfer a sum of money from the General Fund to Swimming Pool Fund; and declaring an emergency (E)

Motion by Bala, seconded by Salotto, the rules of Wickliffe City Council be suspended and Ordinance 2025-34 be placed on third and final reading.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Thielman, that Ordinance 2025-34 be adopted as presented.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. **Ordinance 2025-34 adopted.**

OR2025-35 *By Title Only* An ordinance amending Chapter 769 Tourist Homes and Motels of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio to include Section 769.04 Short Term Rental Prohibition in a Residential District and amending Section 769.99 Penalty; and declaring an emergency (E)

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Thielman, the rules of Wickliffe City Council be suspended and Ordinance 2025-35 be placed on third and final reading.

Discussion: Councilperson Bala noted he did not like having government tell you what you can do at your own house.

Councilperson Salotto seconded that statement. She feels this is prohibitive and short-sighted as this is 2025 and things are a lot different today. She believes this should be considered a bit more before just banning it.

Councilperson Koski understands there have been some problems, but noted when she travels out of town, she has stayed at Air B-N-Bs. She believes they are well taken care of and occupants are well screened there should not be problems.

Roll Call:

Yes: Gerhardstein, Jaworski, Levon, Thielman

No: Bala, Koski, Salotto

Motion Failed. **Ordinance moves to SECOND READING at the next meeting.**

Resolutions

RES2025-09 *By Title Only* A resolution adopting Tax Budget of the City of Wickliffe, Ohio for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2026 and submitting same to the Auditor of Lake County, Ohio; and declaring an emergency

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, the rules of Wickliffe City Council be suspended and Resolution 2025-09 be placed on third and final reading.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Thielman, that Resolution 2025-09 be adopted as presented.

Discussion: Councilperson Gerhardstein noted he will not vote for this as he does not believe this was set up fairly by the County with regard to who was a part of the committee. He also noted he does not like the County demanding to have control of the staffing of our Police Department. It was brought to his attention that he was commenting on the wrong ordinance – this discussion is regarding the ordinance that is next on the agenda. Mr. Gerhardstein apologized. Everyone chuckled as they saw the look of bewilderment on the Finance Director's face.

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. **Resolution 2025-09 adopted.**

RES2025-10 *By Title Only* A resolution accepting the Lake County Final Plan for the Next Generation 9-1-1 System; and declaring an emergency (E)

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Thielman, the rules of Wickliffe City Council be suspended and Resolution 2025-10 be placed on third and final reading.

Discussion: None

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Thielman, that Resolution 2025-10 be adopted as presented.

Discussion: Councilperson Gerhardstein continued his comments (see above), noting the City of Eastlake also voted this down due to the County's reach into the control of staffing. He asked the Chief to comment before the vote.

Chief Bush requested Council vote no on this resolution. He noted the plan is restrictive and requires two dispatchers at all times. He noted that Lake County is the only one of the eighty-eight counties in Ohio that chose to require two dispatchers; every other county agreed that one was sufficient. He believes this intrudes on Home Rule. He speculated what might be the next requirement that we would be responsible to pay for. He believes this is ridiculous.

Councilperson Thielman agreed, and chose not to comment on whether one or two or three dispatchers should be required. He also believes this is a Home Rule issue and we should be allowed the right to say what we would like to have, and the County should not be allowed to dictate how we operate our entity.

Councilperson Jaworski wished to follow up on his comments from the last meeting, noting he supports the Chief's stance on this. He agrees that no one should be telling us who to employ or how many people we need to have in any positions.

Roll Call:

Yes: None

No: Bala, Gerhardstein, Jaworski, Koski, Levon, Salotto, Thielman

Motion carried. **Resolution 2025-10 FAILED.**

Other Legislation

There was no Other Legislation.

Miscellaneous

Councilperson Salotto asked to put something in committee. She would like to discuss restructuring the meeting concept. She would like to discuss off premise – if someone cannot be present at the meeting – having the option to call in and participate as was the case during COVID. She is aware that some cities offer this and wondered if this idea could be explored.

Council President Levon noted we would need to look to the Law Director to investigate this topic, as the previous Law Director said it was not legal in Ohio to vote remotely. It was legal during COVID, but this was changed back after, requiring people to be present in the facility to vote.

Law Director Iosue noted there has been some legislation in the state to revert back to allowing it. He is aware there are a few cities doing it, but last he saw, it hadn't passed yet. He will look into this and will have an answer when Council resumes in the fall.

Ms. Salotto noted she would appreciate it. She noted she has had a few tough times regarding attendance over the last few months because of her employment. It happened because of company restructuring, and she was unable to be here for a few Mondays. She noted this could happen to anyone, and is the reality of having employment other than the City of Wickliffe. She stated our employers sometimes make us do things that we do not wish to do. She stated she was watching the meeting and was unable to call in to take part every single time. She stated it went well during COVID. She believes this is something that could help everyone if they are unable to be at a meeting at a particular time.

Council President Levon noted he was under the impression that it was illegal based on the statement of our previous Law Director. He noted this will be investigated.

Adjournment

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Thielman, to adjourn the meeting to Executive Session pursuant to Section 121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment, employment, or compensation of a public employee or official.

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, to reconvene the meeting from Executive Session.

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. Meeting reconvened at 8:22 PM.

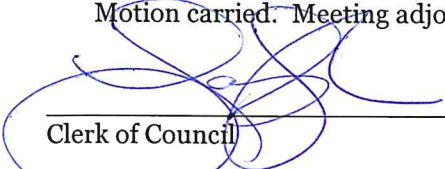
Motion by Gerhardstein, seconded by Bala, to adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call:

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

No: None

Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM.


Clerk of Council


Council President and Presiding Officer