

Service Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
December 1, 2025

The Service Committee met in Council Chambers on December 1, 2025 with these members in attendance:

Jeff Rath – Chair
Dustin Neely – Vice Chair
Bill Cost Jr.
Beth Bline
Bradley Chute

We wish to report:

1. **Ordinance No. 25-41** AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY, GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS 165 SOUTH 3rd STREET, CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, PARCEL TAX ID #054-215808-00.000, FROM THAT OF LB LIMITED INTENSITY BUSINESS ZONING DISTRICT TO TFR TWO-FAMILY RESIDENCE ZONING DISTRICT, ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO.

Brian Morehead, City Engineer - This is a request that came in from a property owner to change the zoning over to allow him to construct a two-family residence on that site.

Mr. Rath – For these zoning changes, just as a reminder, we'll vote to pass this on to the Planning Commission. They will render an opinion and send them back to us and we will vote on them.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Neely, Second by Ms. Bline, Motion passed 5-0

2. **Ordinance No. 25-42** AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY, GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS 200 DAY AVENUE, CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, PARCEL TAX ID #054-242886-00.000 AND 024-233454-00.000, FROM THAT OF SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE RH- HIGH DENSITY ZONING DISTRICT TO HB HIGH INTENSITY BUSINESS ZONING DISTRICT, ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO.

Mr. Morehead - This request comes to us from the owners of Don and Sue's Pizza. These two parcels are on the south side of the current restaurant. He actually just recently bought 200 Day Avenue and he wants to convert those over to match the zoning of the rest of the business.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Neely, Second by Ms. Bline, Motion passed 5-0

Mr. Rath – Up next is Ordinance 25-43. That has been pulled from the agenda. Up next is 25-44. That has been pulled from the agenda. Up next, we have Mr. Fox from the Water Department. He's going to give us an update on water projects.

Brandon Fox, Water Administrator - Good evening. It's December, so it's almost the end of the year, right? So, just wanted to provide a few updates on our ongoing water and sewer projects. You all can

read, so I won't read all of this, but I do want to touch on every one of them just so I can try to answer any questions you might have. So, first off, Thornwood-Faye Drive booster stations. This is a water project that was started four or five years ago. It's replacing the existing booster station on Thornwood Drive and River Road and also adding a second redundant station down on Faye Drive just east of the PCA site where they're building the PCA site. So, that project is wrapping up. Should have it done hopefully within the first quarter of 2026. So, everything's going well on that. We're just waiting on some electrical issues and we'll get that project finished up. Lead Service Lines 1 through 5. Those are currently complete projects, and you can see the funding there. We used almost \$2.2 million of ARP funds and then almost \$5.5 million of OWDA loans. On all of these projects, though, just remember that the loans are 53% principal forgiveness. So, we're only paying 47% of that money back at 0% interest for 20 years. So, it's a really, really good deal. The 1 through 5, we replaced about 2,000 services. Then on to Lead Service Line No. 6. We've got about a month left of that project, and that'll have replaced 1,000 services. Lead Service Line 7 is getting ready to start first quarter of 2026. That'll replace 1,600 galvanized and or lead services, and that'll run about 18 months. So, that'll run into 2027. We had planned Lead Service Lines 8 through 12, but because of the decreased cost per service, we've been able to expedite these replacements. I do have a loan approved for Lead Service Line No. 8 that would award in June of next year, but we are waiting to kind of see when that plays out and how many of those projects we still need to complete in order to get all of our galvanized services out of the city. So those projects are going really, really well, but we still do have customers, like I've mentioned several times on these projects, we still have customers, once we notify a customer four times that they have a galvanized service we will walk away from that property and they'll be responsible for that replacement on their own if they have a failure in the future. So right now, we've got about 700 of those customers that we're going to be sending notices to that will say we're walking away, you know, speak now or forever hold your peace. So, we're still willing to do it but that was our requirement from EPA is four notifications.

Mr. Rath – Do you have a general geographic description of 6,7, and 8-12?

Mr. Fox - Six is working mainly in the Hudson Avenue–Mount Vernon Road area because we're trying to get those completed before the 16 North Sewer Separation Project. Number seven will be on the southwest side of the city—kind of from where we border Heath up through downtown. And then eight through twelve is spread throughout the entire city. We're getting to the point where we're scratching the bottom of the barrel to come up with enough to continue to do them, where people will give us the approval to do their work—their service. The Raccoon Creek Stream Bank project was a stormwater project, but I left it on here. It was completed about a year and a half ago, but we have not gotten all the funding completed because it was a cooperative effort with the Army Corps of Engineers. So, in the third quarter of next year, we will receive the final approval from the Army Corps of Engineers, and the funding will be complete for that project. We did have a bond that funded that project. We could get a small portion of that back from the Army Corps of Engineers if the project came in under budget—was completed under budget—but we'll find that out next year in the third quarter. South 2nd Street is part of our ongoing long-term control plan for the wastewater collection system. It's separating the storm sewer and sanitary sewer, and we're also replacing aging water lines in the system. This project is wrapping up. We were hoping to have it done by the end of this year, but due to some delays, it is going to push into the second quarter of 2026 before all the paving, sidewalks, and everything else are done. Unfortunately, for that project, 2nd Street under the railroad bridge will be closed through the winter, so traffic will not be able to go through there. The River Road sewer project is replacing about three-quarters of a mile of current force main sewer. There's a pump station at the Park Trail subdivision that pumps wastewater into our system on Thornwood Drive. This project

will replace that pump station and make it gravity sewer. It is currently underway and is going really, really well. I know the residents in that area are struggling with the road closure again. I apologize for that, but it is part of the process. We're hoping to have that road opened before the end of the year—don't hold me to that. It'll probably push into 2026 before that road is fully opened, but it is going really, really well. That project was funded entirely by the American Rescue Plan Act, so we've got about four million dollars that is basically a grant for the project. The 16 North Sewer Separation Project—this will be, as I've spoken to many times, the largest of our long-term control plan projects. It is currently out for bid. The estimate on the project is about 56 million dollars. Our bid opening is on December 12th. This project will replace all the sewer, storm sewer, sanitary sewer, water lines, sidewalks, and streets on Mount Vernon Road from 16 all the way up to Rugg Avenue, North Street, and those areas. The 16 North project will start early next spring, and it must be completed before July of 2028. So, that project will— I guess one of the issues of that project is that we will be closing Mount Vernon Road for nine to twelve months. When that happens, that's going to be a definite impact to city traffic and through-traffic. We will cooperate and communicate with folks when that happens, and we've already done so, but that will be the biggest impact of the project. The 16 North separation—sewer separation Phase Two. If you remember, this project was all supposed to be done as one, and it was over a hundred million dollars. We cooperated with the EPA to get the project split into two phases. Now, Phase One is out for bid, and Phase Two will be another about fifty million dollars that is required to be completed by 2031. We were able to push the duration of the project back. It made it a little easier for us to help fund, as well as improve the constructability of the project. That project will hit Hudson Avenue basically from St. Clair up to Stevens Street, and then the side streets in between—same as what you've seen down on 4th Street downtown and 2nd Street. Complete removal, complete replacement of the asphalt and sidewalks as well. Licking River Dam Improvements: If you drive up by Horns Hill Road by the dam, you've seen that there was some spill or an overflow channel created in that area. That is for when there are flood conditions; the dam overflows and it prevents erosion from occurring. That was a project required by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and that project is substantially complete. We should have it done by the end of the year, where we can get it closed out and paid off. A couple of studies that we're doing: the wastewater system master plan and rate study. With all of the capital projects that we have completed to date, and all of the projects over the next 20 years that will be required, we completed a master plan. I've got the draft master plan, and it's recommending the projects that we need to do within the collection system as well as at the wastewater plant itself. The wastewater plant has not undergone any significant increase in capacity in about 30 years. We are currently rated at eight million gallons a day, and we treat about seven and a half million gallons a day. The challenge with that is, as new development comes into the city, EPA has to approve those developments. If we don't have capacity at our wastewater plant, we can't add new developments. So, what we're trying to do as part of that is to re-rate the wastewater plant—without capital infrastructure improvements—to nine million gallons a day. That will buy us some time to allow development to continue to happen. Then we'll actually have a project forthcoming to increase the plant from nine million to twelve million gallons a day. That will come out of this master plan. As part of that is the funding side of it, so we're also completing a rate study that will help set our rates up for the next 5, 10, and 20 years to help fund operation expenses and capital improvements that may or may not be needed. That should be completed here within the next month. Water Treatment Plant Rehab: As part of our asset management plan that we completed about two years ago, the water plant is in need of some upgrades. A lot of the assets are at or near failure because the plant has not been touched in 30 years in a significant fashion. We are currently getting ready to start design next year, with the intent of construction in the 2028–2029 time frame. That's about a 30-million-dollar project

that the engineers are estimating currently. We'll be digging into that one shortly. Another one, which I know people are awaiting, is our water office utility billing software replacement. We have a system that has been in place since 2006, and it will no longer be supported in 2027. We are currently selecting a vendor to replace our billing software. We've gone through the selection; we whittled it down to two. We had 12 vendors that submitted and were interested. We dwindled it down to two and are currently negotiating price and scope for that project. We're hoping that is in my 2026 budget, hoping to implement that next year. It's about a 12-month implementation, and it will improve our efficiencies in our water office, plus the customer user interface that customers see when they log on to check their account and pay their bill. It's estimated to be about a three- to five-hundred-thousand-dollar investment. It's a big cost for us, but it'll be a big improvement as well.

Mr. Rath – Will it allow customers to pay online?

Mr. Fox – Yes. It will drastically improve the customer experience. Be able to see your historic bills. It'll be much, much improved from what you see now. Happy to answer any questions on those. I know it's a lot, but we have a lot going on.

Tim Waldren, 167 S. 2nd St. - I know I've been complaining to you a lot about this. I've been complaining about it since they started finishing the South St. Street sewer separation. It isn't as bad as it is in the wintertime, but in the summertime, when the weather warms up, you'll have to do something about the smell. Even on 4th and National Drive, I walked, well, I didn't walk, I drove, and the smell is bad down in that area. The sewer, the gases are coming out of the sewer. It's really bad. I just want to get this on the record this year, so if anything happens next year when they get finished, I can come up and complain more. I know I complain, I know, but the smell is really bad down there in the summertime, and with no wind blowing and all that stuff, you can't even sit on the front porch. Thank you.

Meeting stands adjourned

Jeff Rath - Chair