

## COUNCIL MINUTES

January 20, 2026  
Council Chambers  
7:00 P.M.

### **President Harris called the meeting to order**

**ROLL CALL** – Mr. Barker, Ms. Bline, Mr. Chute, Mr. Cost, Mr. Houser, Ms. Ingold, Mr. Labutis, Mr. Marmie, Mr. Neely, Ms. Newman

**INVOCATION** – Ms. Bline

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - Mirabelle Brady, 7th grade, Liberty Middle School

### **CAUCUS**

**Mr. Marmie** – Mr. President, I would like to invoke Rule 11 on Ordinance 26-02 as the Majority Leader and also the Minority Leader agree to that.

**By: Mr. Marmie, Ms. Ingold, Mr. Cost, Ms. Bline**

**26-02** AN ORDINANCE SUBMITTING THE QUESTION “SHALL THE PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, BE ADOPTED” TO THE VOTERS OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Marmie, Second by Mr. Cost**

**Mr. Marmie** – Mr. President, we are pushing this through invoking Rule 11 because we need to meet a deadline to get it on to the ballot. The changes that are happening here it was pretty much one-dimensional. It's just to our notifications and requirements for publication. We're changing the language to make it our choice as far as who we utilize and how we communicate. It should save the City somewhere between \$25,000 and \$30,000 a year to do this. We have our own tools as far as our website and our different social media venues that we have. So, I just think that it's going to be more efficient and a more effective use of our taxpayers dollars.

**Motion passed 10-0**

**MINUTES of January 5, 2026, Motion to accept by Mr. Labutis, Second by Mr. Houser, Passed by acclamation**

### **APPOINTMENTS**

**Mayor Hall** – Reappointing Mary Billy to The Combined General Health District Board as one of the two City of Newark representatives. Her new term begins March 1, 2026 and will expire February 28, 2031. Subsequent appointments will be five-year terms. - **Passed by acclamation**

### **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

There are none this meeting.

### **REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICIALS**

**Ryan Bubb, City Auditor** – Operating report for the period ending December 31, 2025 - **Received and Filed without objection**

**Brenda Cooper, Tax Administrator** – Income Tax Revenue Reports for the period ending December 31, 2025 - **Received and Filed without objection**

#### **PETITIONS**

Alley vacation running north from Morgan Avenue and lying south of Boner Street

#### **COMMUNICATIONS**

**Keith Faber, Ohio Auditor of State** – City of Newark, Licking County, Single Audit January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024 - **Received and Filed without objection**

**Dave Froelich** - Email communication containing an official request to Council - **Received and Filed without objection**

#### **COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

#### **ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING**

There are none this meeting.

#### **ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING**

There are none this meeting.

#### **RESOLUTIONS ON SECOND READING**

**By: Mr. Rath, Mr. Cost, Ms. Ingold, Mr. Marmie, Ms. Bline, Mr. Barker**

**25-82** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO, TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITHOUT COMPETITIVE BIDDING, SUBJECT TO THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS, FOR THE PURCHASE OF A NEW DUMP TRUCK AND BED FOR THE WATER DISTRIBUTION/SEWER MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT THROUGH SOURCEWELL, THE STATES COOPERATIVE PURCHASING PROGRAM.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Barker, Second by Mr. Houser, Motion passed 10-0**

#### **RESOLUTIONS ON FIRST READING**

There are none this meeting.

#### **COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

**Jenny Fry, 31 Custer Rd., Heath, Ohio** - I'm here representing Newark Area Special Olympics, but we do service Licking County. We do share it with Southwest Licking. We're just trying to get our name out there some more and get some more community help and resources and also looking for athletes and coaches. This is one of the athletes' parents with me to support us. So just trying to get us out there some more. Thank you.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Tricia Moore, Director of Law** – Just briefly, congratulations Par Excellence on a great Martin Luther King Day breakfast, and congratulations to President Harris on his award at the breakfast. With that, I'll pass.

**Mayor Hall** – She just took the words right out of my mouth. It was a great breakfast yesterday morning, a good turn out even with the cold weather. I appreciate OSU Newark for hosting that, Par Excellent, pushing it. And it's, how many years? 29, I thought. It'll be the 30th year. So, it's a great way for the community to come together on such a great day. I would say, I don't want to forget about Reverend Charles Noble, that kind of was our, and I don't want to compare, but our local MLK a little bit. He did so many things in this community, and Par Excellence exists because of that, and that school's been pretty successful. But carrying on that legacy of change and that difference in our community, and that networking, yesterday's word was bridge. I talked about the physical bridges, but it's also the emotional bridges and the personal bridges that we create across this community, and I'm very proud of it in many ways in Newark, how well we all work together and do things. So again, thank you, it was a great breakfast, and I look forward to next year's. And Jeff, you were a speaker one year, and you were award the next. Maybe next year they might forget about you (inaudible). With that, I'll pass. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Barker** – Thank you, Mr. President. First, I need to call the Service Committee meeting for February 2nd. Congratulations—I'm sorry, I missed it yesterday morning, your receiving the Helping Hands Award for 2026. Congratulations again. And then I also want to take some time and thank our Discretionary Charter Review Committee that we passed that legislation tonight through Rule 11. Getting those committees together can sometimes be a challenge, and they were right on it right away. So, I want to thank all of those community members for taking the time to do that, and it's important for us here at the City to work with those people across party lines at all times. So with that, I thank them, and I will pass.

**Ms. Bline** – Thank you, Mr. President. Congratulations on your award. You deserve it. I also want to thank the Frys and Mrs. Swartz for coming. That was—you did a great job. Special Olympics plays such a crucial role in our community, and any way we can support them, it's well worth the time and energy there. So, thank you again for coming. Recently, Reverend Joel King, Jr. spoke at the United Church of Christ, and he was a first cousin to Dr. Martin Luther King. It was just a great time just to listen and honor the legacy of Dr. King. It was just a great time, again, just to listen. I also want to thank the Energy Cooperative. They, at no cost to the City, restored a large site. It's made a real difference in the south Newark community, so I appreciate their help. Quickly—four trains are coming. Four. As a preface, I was going to thank Director Mauter for his cooperation in this venture, but even though he is not here, I'll still thank him. We have four trains coming to Newark. The first will go by. The second one will leave from Newark April 26th, 2026—this year. It will be part of the Ohio 250 celebration. This is the Ohio Buckeye Train. It's a great thing to be able to have this coming past our city and then, on the 26th, leaving from our city. We will be going from Newark to Coshocton, and once in Coshocton, the Goodyear Blimp will come and meet the train there. Then the train will go on down to Denison Depot, where there will be a large celebration with a vintage aircraft flyover, car shows, USO 1940s-style music the whole time with period players. So, it's going to be a great time. Now, there are still tickets available. So if you haven't gotten your tickets for the train that leaves from Newark on the 26th, please do so. Get them fast—they're hot. With that, I'll pass.

**Mr. Chute** - Thank you, Mr. President. I will pass.

**Mr. Cost** – I will pass also, thank you.

**Mr. Houser** – I'll pass as well, thank you.

**Ms. Ingold** – Thank you, Mr. President. I too, Jeff, congratulate you and was excited to be at the table of the star of the day. So, thank you very much. Also, I want to thank the Service Department and the Roads Department. Our streets are looking pretty good as we've had snow. People were out the night

before to drop some salt and so forth, and I've even had people tell me the streets are looking good—last year all they did was complain. So, thank you to the Streets and Roads Department.

**Mr. Labutis** – Thank you, Mr. President. I'd like to thank our Water Administrator, Brandon Fox. He reached out to a constituent who had some concerns on an issue, so being able to reach out to them and help them out. And then congratulations to President Harris on your award yesterday. Most definitely well deserved. With that, I will pass.

**Mr. Marmie** – Thank you, Mr. President. I need to call a Finance Committee meeting for February 2nd. I, too, want to congratulate you, and sorry I was unable to attend and wish I could have seen you receive the award. I appreciate all that you do for the community, and in particular for that event, and just the support that you've shown in bringing this whole group even closer to that is greatly appreciated. I, too, want to thank the Charter Review Board that came together quickly as far as being organized and just ready to hit the ground running. Along with our Law Director—she definitely kept everybody on track, all the language, had it all together—and I appreciate what she did to make that happen. It's greatly appreciated. And with that, I will pass.

**Mr. Neely** – Thank you, I will pass.

**Ms. Newman** – Thank you, President Harris. Again, congratulations. My daughter and I were there and got to see you get the award. That was really wonderful, so congrats on that recognition. I also have a couple of invitations for everybody to come out to the 7th Ward. I don't know if anybody has seen on socials, but R&M Bakery in the 7th Ward just underwent some pretty extensive renovations inside. So, I think that means everyone needs to get cookies. I think I'll be bringing those along for the next council meeting—just to make sure you're here. It's an exciting update for a longstanding institution in the 7th Ward. I think this is all food-themed because I am also inviting you out this coming Saturday. The Historic Hudson Community Association is having its annual chicken noodle dinner on Saturday. It is at the Union Hall on Hudson from 4:00 to 6:30. Handmade chicken and noodles, sides, mashed potatoes, desserts. There's a silent auction. There's going to be live music. It's just a really wonderful day to sit down and break bread with your neighbors. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$6 for kids. We have takeout available if you can't stick around. But please come out to the Union Hall this Saturday, 4:00 to 6:30. And with that, I'll pass on my food invitations.

**President Harris** – Thank you everyone for the nice comments. Yeah, I'm glad that's over. It's nice to get, but it's just kind of embarrassing. But anyway, next Friday, the 30th, is the Groundhog breakfast. Bright and early, so don't forget about that. Our next meeting will be February 2nd.

**ADJOURNMENT - Motion to adjourn by Mr. Cost, Second by Mr. Labutis, passed by acclamation**

**Jeff Harris, President of Council**