

Service Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
March 2, 2026

The Service Committee met in Council Chambers on March 2, 2026 with these members in attendance:

Spencer Barker – Chair
Dustin Neely – Vice Chair
Bill Cost Jr.
Beth Bline
Bradley Chute

We wish to report:

1. **Ordinance No. 26-11** AN ORDINANCE ANNEXING CERTAIN TERRITORY, GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS BEING APPROXIMATELY 0.9 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, LOCATED IN NEWARK TOWNSHIP, TO THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Brian Morehead, City Engineer - This is a single parcel up off of Goose Pond Road that came to us from Attorney Connie Klema; she's representing the owner on this. I believe the main reason is that the property owner wanted to have sewer and water service in the future. She's off of Goose Pond Road.

Mr. Barker - Great, thank you. What's the reason for the emergency clause? Is that a contract timeline?

Mr. Morehead - The deadline is due to the type of annexation that it is.

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

2. Brandon Fox, Water Administrator – Project updates

Brandon Fox, Water Administrator - Good evening again. I've got a few project updates. I know I was here in December, but I think some things have progressed, so I wanted to be here to address some things and just answer any questions that might be out there. First off, the 16 North Sewer Separation Project, Phase One, you heard me just say that, but the loan is being approved as we speak. That project is getting ready to kick off. It has to be completed by July of 2028, so the contractor is ready to go. A couple of things that are going to happen early on in the project: tree removal is number one. We've got about 80 to 90 trees that are going to be removed as part of this project. The trees have to be removed, or taken down, before April 1 due to the Indiana bat season. After April 1 through October 1, they can't take those trees down. So, we are working diligently to get them under contract so they can get in here the third or fourth week of March and get those trees taken down. Most of those trees in Phase One, there are a couple on Mount Vernon Road, but most of those are on Moull, Rugg, Jefferson, and the next street over. I'm sorry. On those four side streets west of Mount Vernon Road. So, if you live in that area, we're going to be marking those trees. They'll be putting orange tape on them, so you will see it. If you see it in front of your property and you have a question about it, by all means reach out to our water office so we can help send somebody out to talk to you about it. The trees are going to be taken down because of the impact of the sewer. We are doing a complete excavation, sidewalk to sidewalk, and so the

concern was that if we go digging through those root balls and don't take them down proactively, in two, three, four, or five years there's a high percentage that they will die on their own. So, we're taking them down. We don't want to have dead trees in five years that we have to deal with. We also have a replacement program as part of this project. If folks want a tree replaced back in their front yard, we've got four or five varieties that our design folks have put together that are a good variety of tree for the application. It won't be in the tree lawn; it will be behind the sidewalk so that we don't have big root balls pushing up the sidewalks and getting into our sewers and streets in the future. We've also got a memorandum of understanding with Dawes, and Dawes is actually helping us through that process as well. If you don't want a tree in your front yard, we won't put one back, but we do have the opportunity to do that if folks want it. Downspout disconnection: again, the entire reason for this project is to remove stormwater from our sanitary sewers. We've identified, through the design process, a large portion of customers that have downspouts draining rainwater from their roofs and properties into our current combined sewer system. So, we are going to be working with customers on the private side to remove those downspouts from the sewer. We've identified, I think, 60 or 70 homes that have those connected. We'll be working with the owners to gain access onto the property, and then they will basically remove the downspout from where it goes into the ground, plug and cap that connection, and then either add a splash block onto the sidewalk, to the street, or onto their grass area. So just be aware that that will be happening. If somebody from the City or a contractor from Fabrizi knocks on your door, that's probably what they are looking to do.

Mr. Barker - On this, all that work, are we paying for that, or is it on the property owner?

Mr. Fox - The City will pay for it as part of the project. Good question. Yeah, so the flyer you see in front of you is what we put together. We'll be able to hand it out to the customers and kind of show them what we're expecting to do. I'm happy to share that with Council or other members who may want to see it to share with your constituents.

Mr. Barker - Obviously you've got some already identified, but like the lead line service program, are you going to run the same kind of campaign?

Mr. Fox - Through the design, we did a lot of dye testing on the sewer. They would put dye down the downspout, and if it came out in our sewer, we knew it was connected. But I'm sure we'll run into some that we didn't know were there, so we'll address those as we go along. Brick streets: that was another conversation that we had a lot of discussion on as we went through the design of this project. We've got seven brick streets—Rugg, Fairfield, Kibler, North Elizabeth, and Charles Street that are currently brick streets. Throughout the design, we debated back and forth on whether to replace those with brick streets or to asphalt them. The decision was made to asphalt them after construction. The main driver behind that was economics. It was going to be about \$2.5 million more in project costs to put brick streets back. However, if you see in your exhibits, we've got a couple of intersections shown. We are putting a lot of the intersections back like Rugg, I think Fairfield and Woods, the one that I showed you on the first page. We're going to put brick in the intersections so it will continue to have that historic feel, as the brick streets do now, but it won't be a full brick street. So just spread the word on that so folks are aware. There are pros and cons to both, but throughout the discussion we had with a lot of folks, we made the decision to move forward with asphaltting those brick streets back. Traffic control: we're going to be impacting the main north-south corridor through the city. When we get on Mount Vernon Road from St. Clair up to Quentin, we do have detours planned, but that portion of Mount Vernon Road will be shut down, plus all the side streets intermittently. So hopefully, we'll be able to communicate with customers as best we can. We'll give folks a minimum of 48 hours' notice. We'll hang door tags if we're going to be impacting their parking in front of their business or their house. But by all means reach out to our office, our water office, and we'll come out and meet with you and try to address concerns as they come up. Because they will, you know, issues will come up and

we'll address them in a timely manner. But wanted folks to be aware of that. That's the big-ticket things that are going to happen, you know, short-term. I'll keep you updated as we go along. But any questions on that project in general?

Michelle Newman, 7th Ward Council Member - So as 7th Ward representative, I'm going to get to experience this firsthand. I live on Fairfield. So, you know, I'll be kind of in the first batch that's going through here, and recognizing now that the trees are going to come down prior to the deadline of April 1st. This may sound a little bit mushy, but with the coming of spring, it is a big deal in our neighborhood, right? I know it's emotional for me to know that all of the trees are going to be coming down in our neighborhood. Is there going to be written correspondence that goes out to our neighbors before that happens? Or can I work with you guys? I will go door-to-door and put stuff on people's doors. Because I can tell you it will be an emotional response about even though some folks know it's coming, a lot aren't in the know and aren't aware that it's happening. Is there something we can do communication-wise maybe where we could work together to notify the neighbors that this is going to be happening? Because it this is a really big deal for us. It's a fundamental change to our neighborhood. So that's just kind of my question.

Mr. Fox - It's a great question. First off, not all the trees are coming down. So, we're not taking every tree down. It's just the impacted trees. So, we've got exhibits to show all the trees and the ones that we are going to be taking down. But absolutely be happy to share any of our maps. We've got maps with red dots of which trees are coming down. We can share that with you folks and distribute it however best needed. And truly understand, we've had discussions about the trees. The second phase of this project starting in 2028-29 will be on Hudson Avenue. Those are large mature trees that it's going to impact even more. Some for the good, some of the bad. We can argue all day long whether it's right or wrong and somebody will say I want it down and somebody says they don't want it down. But happy to share and meet with folks that we need to kind of spread the information. Absolutely.

Ms. Newman - Just to kind of share on the record so it's here. I'll make sure that I follow up just especially for the first few streets that are going to be impacted with the tree removal, because a lot of ours on Fairfield are in that little thoroughfare that's right there that's going to have to be removed. Hudson's pretty well organized with the Historic Hudson Association. They've had a lot of meetings. You've been great coming in and talking to them. For a lot of our side streets they aren't necessarily affiliated and haven't been privy to those conversations. So, I just really want to make sure we have clear communication with them. So, I'll get with you this week and see if we can come up with something and I'll help go door-to-door just to let people know what's going on. So, thank you.

Mr. Fox - Yeah and absolutely happy to do that. What I mentioned earlier, they'll be marking the trees prior to them coming down. So, they'll be putting red flags or pink flags around them. So if you see one, you got a question about it, why is this one coming down? You know reach out to us. We'll be happy to come out and talk and talk through it. Great question.

Rochelle Volen-Smith, 237 Violet Ct. - I kind of know some of those areas really well. I've been very involved in some of those sections through the years, and I did have a question about, for instance, the brick streets. A lot of those streets were very narrow. They were actually designed for horses at one point, and it seems like putting brick in the middle somehow is going to make parking and that sort of thing even worse than it is. What way are you planning on doing that without making traffic more difficult? I know at the corner of, for instance, Hudson and North Street, there was an attempt to do a roundabout, and it failed miserably. It wouldn't work with buses and trucks and all with Owens Corning. So that was the question, and I'm hoping, well, I guess I have to turn it into a question. In terms of the trees, that area is very fond of its gardens, so I hope that the City is going to do this in

such a way that is going to be considerate of the people there, and I'm curious as to what way you're going to do that. Thank you.

Mr. Barker - I think one thing real quick, Brandon, I think you might be misunderstood. There's not going to be like a brick median down the center. If you want to come up here, you can. Brandon's got them. He can show you. It's just a brick...Yes, it's similar to what Granville is doing. It's drivable. It's not going to be a hindrance.

Mr. Fox - Lead service line projects. I've been up here a lot speaking to this. This is your final notice to all customers that need to hear it. We have replaced, we're on lead service line project number seven since 2022, and we've replaced about 3,200 services to date. We've got about 4,500 more to go. We have been knocking on the door. Our contractors have been knocking on the doors trying to get customers that we know have galvanized service lines a replacement free of charge. If we knock on your door four times, we'll be walking away after that. So, we are getting ready to send a notice out to about 1,200 customers that we've attempted three times. This will be our fourth attempt. After that time, if you receive a mailer or an email that says, you know, contact us, big yellow flag, and gives you a QR code that you need to reach out to us, after that fourth attempt, we will no longer be contacting you. So that's per Ohio EPA. Any future service issues you have with your service line will be the responsibility of the homeowner to repair. So, it's a \$4,000 or \$5,000 free water line that we're providing free of charge to the residents. So happy to do it, but, you know, we can only do it so many times, and after that fourth attempt, we're going to be walking away. So spread the word.

Meeting stands adjourned

Spencer Barker - Chair