



**Ravenna City Council  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Monday, June 2, 2025, at 6:00 pm**

**The Regular Council Meeting was held in person in Council Chambers.**

**The Regular Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. June 2, 2025, by Council President, Rob Kairis**

**Moment of Meditation & Silence**

President Kairis called a moment of meditation and silence.

**Pledge to Flag**

President Kairis then led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

The following Council Members were present: Council President, Rob Kairis, Amy Michael, Cheryl Wood, Paul Moskun, Christina West, Tyler Marovich

**Also in attendance:** Mayor Frank Seman; Interim Police Chief, Jake Smallfield; Fire Chief, Mark Chapple; Service Director, Tim Contant; Finance Director, Tami Lorence; Controller, Brian Huff; Economic Development Director, Dennis West; Council Clerk; Chelsea Gregor, Larry Silenius, Cliff Soudil, Eve Francis, Greg Francis, Barb Niemiller, Cynthia Miller, Heather Sepelak

**Delegations from the Public:**

Heather Sepelak, addressed Council to speak on behalf of the American Legion. She thanked the Mayor for issuing a proclamation and mentioned that some citizens had expressed concern about the condition of the American flag on the flagpole. She inquired whether the Township was responsible for its upkeep.

Mr. Kairis responded that the flagpole is owned by Ravenna Township and that a group had previously raised funds to restore it, though he was unsure who had purchased the current flag. He indicated that concerns about the flag should be directed to the Township.

Mr. Kairis noted a recent communication regarding the liquor license, which would be addressed under new business.

Mr. Kairis then introduced the consent agenda, which included communication from the Division of Liquor Control, meeting minutes, official reports, and various ordinances selected by the council for inclusion. He asked if any items should be moved to the regular agenda. Hearing no requests, he called for a motion.

**Approval of the Agenda:**

- Motion to approve the agenda by Mr. Marovich, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**
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**Consent Agenda:**

**Communications:** A letter from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control regarding a permit approval for 106 E. Main St. and a Thank You card from Friends of Ravenna Schools.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

- Special City Council Meeting of April 21, 2025
- Regular City Council Meeting of May 5, 2025
- Special City Council Meeting of May 19, 2025

**Report of Officials:**

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**Ordinances:**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-052** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A 5-YEAR CONTRACT WITH BRITE LLC FOR CLOUD STORAGE IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-053** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH MONTROSE FORD TO PURCHASE TWO (2) NEW VEHICLES FOR THE RAVENNA POLICE DEPARTMENT FROM FUND 553, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-054** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE FROM HALL PUBLIC SAFETY UPFITTERS TO UPFIT TWO (2) POLICE CRUISERS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-056** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF RAVENNA, PART SIX – GENERAL OFFENSES CODE; CHAPTER 660 – SAFETY, SANITATION AND HEALTH; SECTION 660.08 – OPEN BURNING, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-057** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH JD SERVICES FOR THE PAINTING OF PAVEMENT MARKINGS AND STRIPING, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-058** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH RAVENNA TOWNSHIP, RAVENNA SCHOOL DISTRICT, VILLAGE OF MANTUA, PMHA, AXESS FAMILY SERVICES AND MAPLEWOOD CAREER CENTER TO DEVELOP A SALT CONSORTIUM TO PURCHASE SALT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-059** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH VERDANTAS CONSULTANTS TO PERFORM A UTILITY RATE STUDY AND APPROPRIATING A TOTAL OF \$45,000 EQUALLY FROM FUNDS 670 AND 677, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-061** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE FINANCE DIRECTOR, UPON THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, TO PAY CERTAIN PURCHASE ORDERS MADE THAT EXCEED \$3,000.00, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- Motion to dispense with the requirements of the City Charter in the Revised Code of Ohio with reference to reading on three separate days and adopting emergency clauses and approving the consent agenda by Mr. Marovich, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**

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**Invited City Officials:**

Economic Development Director, Dennis West, presented an overview of the City's recent progress and ongoing initiatives. He emphasized that economic development is fundamentally about communication and marketing, noting the importance of clearly identifying what Ravenna has to offer. His marketing theme, "*Ravenna Is*", positions the city as vibrant and forward-looking. Mr. West highlighted that from 2020 to 2023, Ravenna experienced its most significant business growth since the 1970s. This includes leveraging state small business grants to support six local businesses, the creation of joint economic development districts (JEDDs) with Rootstown and Ravenna Townships, and an \$18 million increase in local wages and payroll between 2023 and 2024. Mr. West cited key business developments such as ACE Laboratories expanded research on tire compound pollutants, Standard Hydrogen relocating from Florida and

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innovating sulfur-free hydrogen production, LG Chem and the Veteran Affairs' new CBOC facility as examples of successful business attraction. He also noted the cleanup of the Chestnut Street brownfield, which is being prepared for industrial redevelopment, and the anticipated arrival of Menards by quarter one of 2026. Mr. West introduced Daniels Health, a medical waste company planning to use a 32,000–35,000 sq. ft. facility on Freedom Street, with long-term plans for growth. Additionally, a confidential project potentially bringing 500 jobs is in progress. Mr. West addressed the lack of prior marketing efforts and detailed a new multi-faceted outreach strategy, including a marketing plan targeting downtown revitalization, renovation incentives for downtown building owners, engagement with tenant-representing real estate agents, and a new economic dashboard on Ravenna's website providing updated demographic, consumer, and real estate data. The dashboard identifies key market gaps, particularly in restaurant and retail services, where residents are spending money outside the city. This insight will guide future attraction efforts. The city's marketing efforts also emphasize Ravenna's proximity to supply chains, research hubs, and arts and education institutions. Mr. West concluded by noting Ravenna's strong partnerships, streamlined permitting, and City Council support as key enablers of ongoing development.

**Report of Committees: Committee meetings start at 6:00 PM 6/9/2025.**

**Utilities:** Mr. Moskun stated that there will be one item on the agenda.

**Information Systems:** Mr. Marovich stated that he is not planning for a meeting.

**Planning:** Ms. West said that a meeting is to be determined.

**Committee of the Whole:** Mr. Kairis stated that the next Committee of the Whole meeting is Monday, June 23, 2025, at 6:00 pm.

**Public Health & Safety:** Ms. Michael stated that there are a couple items on the agenda and there will most likely be a meeting.

**Streets & Sidewalks:** Mr. Harper stated that a meeting is to be determined.

**Personnel:** Mr. Calfee stated that no meeting is scheduled.

**Community & Economic Development:** Ms. Wood said a meeting is to be determined.

**Cemetery:** Ms. West stated that there was no meeting that month.

**Parks & Recreation:** Mr. Marovich shared that repairs were made to the walkway bridge at Chestnut Hills Park due to a fallen tree across the railings. He said the Parks and Recreation Department participated in the Ravenna High School Day of service and that the students were very helpful in beautifying the city. Mr. Marovich said that they are collaborating with the Master Gardeners for a new program that will be a hands-on educational experience for all ages, as well as with the kids at summer camp.

Ms. Watkins attended and completed training for three-wheel therapy, which is an adaptive biking program they are hoping to bring to the city, adding that they are looking for grants into purchasing the adaptive trikes and accessories.

Mr. Marovich stated that on Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, Chestnut Hills Park will be recognized by the Chamber of Commerce as one of the new 2024 renovation projects in the City of Ravenna. He shared that there is a Parks Board meeting tomorrow night for any of the members of the public that are interested in attending.

**First Reading of Ordinances:**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-055** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN A PURCHASE AGREEMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF A NEW LADDER/ENGINE FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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Ms. Michael noted that the committee had thoroughly reviewed the proposed ordinance for a new Fire Department ladder engine, valued at approximately \$1.8 million. She emphasized that council members had ample time to ask questions and consult with Chief Chapple, the Mayor, and the Finance Department, and recommended that Council move forward with a vote.

Mr. Kairis clarified that the ordinance would authorize the ordering of the ladder engine, with payment not due until its completion in about two years. He added that financial plans are in place and noted that the city would benefit from investing upfront funds in the meantime to offset costs.

Mr. Calfee expressed concerns over the cumulative spending on fire vehicles and personnel in recent years, as well as the timing and funding approach for this large purchase, given other city needs. Despite his reservations, he acknowledged the thorough discussion and differing viewpoints shared throughout the process.

Ms. Michael reflected on the city's progress over her 16 years on council, acknowledging that while recent investments may seem rapid, they reflect the city's growth and changing needs. She credited community support—particularly through income tax increases—for enabling these improvements.

Mr. Moskun highlighted the age of current fire vehicles and pointed out the high cost of maintaining older equipment. He stated that the new vehicle would be a long-term asset.

Ms. Michael added that the chosen Quint vehicle offers multifunctional capabilities and provides good value, especially with a locked-in price amidst rising inflation. She also appreciated having time to explore the most favorable financing options and acknowledged the value of Mr. Calfee's financial caution.

There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Ms. Wood, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Moskun- Ms. Wood, Mr. Moskun, Ms. Michael, Mr. Harper, Mr. Marovich-**All Ayes**, Mr. Calfee- **No**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Ms. Wood, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. West- Ms. Wood, Ms. West, Ms. Michael, Mr. Moskun, Mr. Harper, Mr. Marovich-**All Ayes**, Ms. Calfee- **No**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2025-055 by Ms. Michael, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ms. Wood- Ms. Michael, Ms. Wood, Mr. Moskun, Mr. Harper, Mr. Marovich-**All Ayes**, Mr. Calfee- **No**

Ordinance 2025-055 was adopted.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-060** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH ARCHER ENERGY, LLC FOR THE CITY OF RAVENNA NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 2025 THROUGH MARCH 2027, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Moskun noted that Archer's current variable rate of \$3.62 per MCF is lower than the previous supplier's, presenting a potential cost savings.

Mr. Kairis clarified that the rate is variable and not fixed until fall. Although other options had been considered, none were found to be preferable at this time. Mr. Kairis also noted that Eastern Power and Energy had ended its contract with the City, which necessitated a new agreement.

Mr. Marovich explained that rate negotiations would be handled between Archer Energy and the city's consultant, in October. If a fixed rate is not agreed upon at that time, the City would remain on Archer's variable rate.

Mr. Kairis emphasized the need for better public communication about the aggregation program, especially to help residents understand how to opt in, as participation is automatic unless a resident previously opted out. He and Ms. Michael suggested using water bills and the City website to share this information.

There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Mr. Calfee, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Michael- **All Ayes**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Mr. Calfee, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Michael- **All Ayes**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2025-060 by Mr. Calfee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**

Ordinance 2025-060 was adopted.

**Second Reading of Ordinances: None**

**Third Reading of Ordinances: None**

**Old Business- None**

**New Business-** Mr. Kairis requested Council's input on a liquor license application for Friends, Brews and Burgers, located at the former Tavern 1888 site on Main Street. He explained that Council has the authority to request a hearing locally, in Columbus, or waive the hearing altogether.

Mr. Calfee asked whether the license was a transfer or a new application, and Mr. Kairis confirmed it appeared to be new.

Ms. Michael recommended delaying any vote until the police department could confirm the applicant's background, citing past instances where applicants with felonies or DUIs were denied.

Discussion followed about the timeline for action, with members noting that the city must respond soon.

Ms. Michael made a motion to postpone the vote until more information was available regarding the license holder.

- Motion to postpone the vote regarding the liquor permit for 106 E. Main St. by Ms. Michael, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr. Marovich- **All Ayes**

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously, with a special meeting to be scheduled for the following Monday to address the liquor permit.

Ms. Michael introduced a new business topic regarding potential revenue generation for the Fire Department. She shared ongoing discussions with the Fire Chief about how ambulance transports, particularly non-emergency transports from nursing homes, are impacting department resources. She expressed concern that these transports, which are not 911 calls, are burdening the department without appropriate compensation. Other communities, she noted, have begun charging nursing homes or requiring them to arrange their own transport services. Ms. Michael also raised concerns about group homes relying on the fire department for non-emergency assistance, such as helping residents who have fallen. She emphasized the need to explore legal avenues to ensure the city is properly reimbursed and to determine whether some calls should be handled by alternate services. Ms. Michael acknowledged the issue is sensitive and will require further input from the Law Director, but indicated more discussion is forthcoming.

**President of Council Remarks-** Mr. Kairis announced plans to hold another special council work session and expressed a desire to continue discussing the committee and legislative processes, and suggested forming a special committee to explore improvements. He noted that a Council member had suggested revisiting the topic of public comment, which could be included in the upcoming discussion. Mr. Kairis invited Council members to suggest other topics for informal discussion and shared that he finds the half-hour meetings insightful and beneficial. He emphasized the importance of understanding current processes and brainstorming new ideas, assuring members that the original list of ideas would be revisited.

**Council Member Remarks**

**Ms. Michael-** Ms. Michael reflected on a recent visit to Burlington, New Jersey, which reminded her of downtown Ravenna. She noted the similarities in architecture and layout but was struck by the number of vacant storefronts in Burlington despite its picturesque setting and proximity to major cities. A conversation with a local shop owner highlighted shared frustrations over downtown revitalization efforts. Ms. Michael shared Ravenna's progress, including initiatives like DORA, and felt grateful for the many community members actively working to improve the city. The experience gave her renewed appreciation for Ravenna and its ongoing development.

**Mr. Harper-** No Comment

**Ms. Wood-** No Comment

**Ms. West-** Ms. West shared that she attended the community resource fair hosted by PMHA on Saturday, noting a strong turnout with numerous vendors, service providers, and families in attendance. She praised the event's organization and expressed interest in participating again next year.

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**Mr. Calfee-** Mr. Calfee highlighted the successful transformation of the municipal parking lot north of Main Street, bordered by Meridian, Cedar, and Locust. Once gravel and in poor condition, the lot was paved, landscaped with grass and mature trees, and now looks significantly improved. He noted its use by movie theater patrons and emphasized the importance of recognizing completed projects that have a positive impact in the City. He also complimented the downtown flower displays, mentioning that the color selection is his wife's favorite and brightens their drives through the area.

**Mr. Moskun-** No Comment

**Mr. Marovich-** No Comment

**Mayor's Remarks-** Mayor Seman provided a brief update, noting that the downtown pocket park will be recognized at the upcoming Raven Awards and thanked City Council for their collaborative efforts on the project. He shared a resident's positive feedback about the City's Street Department crews, highlighting their helpfulness and professionalism. Mayor Seman also mentioned attending the groundbreaking for the new VA building, despite challenging weather conditions. He noted a recent surge in weddings after a lull during the COVID-19 pandemic, sharing that he has now officiated over 200 ceremonies. On staffing, he reported that the HR Director has been busy hiring for the City's summer camp program, with many temporary employee forms still being processed. Lastly, he discussed the recent testing for the Police Chief position, stating that candidates have been interviewed and rated by outside evaluators, with results expected soon.

**Adjourn to Monday, July 7, 2025**

- Motion to adjourn at 7:14 pm by Ms. Wood, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr. Marovich- **All Ayes**

The next Regular Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 7, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.

**ATTEST:**

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Clerk of Council

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Council President