



Ravenna City Council
Community & Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2026

The public meeting was held in person in Ravenna City Council Chambers.

Council present: Council President Rob Kairis, Amy Michael, Paul Moskun, Carmen Laudato, Tyler Marovich, Tim Calfee, Christina West

Also attending the meeting: Mayor Frank Seman; Police Chief, Jake Smallfield; Fire Chief, Mark Chapple; Service Director, Tim Contant; City Engineer; Bob Finney; Finance Director, Tami Lorence; Council Clerk, Chelsea Gregor; Larry Silenius, Cliff Soudil

The Community & Economic Development Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:30 P.M. by Chairperson, Christina West.

The first item was Storage Unit Moratorium.

Ms. West opened the discussion, explaining that she had spoken with Economic Development Director, Dennis West and reviewed related documents. She stated she did not support extending the moratorium for another full year and instead recommended a shorter extension—three to six months—while the committee develops a comprehensive storage facility ordinance. Ms. West emphasized the need for clear guidelines addressing location, size, land use percentage, building materials, appearance, and possible restrictions on open-air storage or pods, rather than continuing a blanket restriction.

Ms. Michael supported extending the moratorium, recommending at least six months. She cited Ravenna's limited available land, and the minimal economic development and tax benefits storage facilities provide. Ms. Michael expressed concern about allowing too many facilities and stressed the importance of protecting land for higher-value development. She also noted that Council members must represent residents' concerns, not just personal opinions.

Mr. Calfee asked for clarification on why the moratorium was originally enacted and questioned whether the city currently has zoning restrictions for storage units. Learning there are none, he raised concerns about Council limiting private property rights, offering hypothetical examples to illustrate the broader implications. Mr. Calfee clarified that he supports protecting remaining open space and is open to strict zoning regulations, particularly opposing open storage and pod-style facilities.

Mr. Kairis cautioned against banning storage units solely based on preference and suggested the city consider whether current facilities meet community demand. He also noted that storage businesses are privately owned properties and advised careful language when discussing ownership. Mr. Kairis suggested that if the moratorium is extended for six months and the committee completes its work sooner, it could be lifted early.

Ms. Laudato asked whether zoning designations, such as restricting storage units to industrial areas, had been considered. She referenced prior work with Todd Peetz on marijuana dispensary zoning and suggested reviewing how similar cities regulate storage facilities.

Mr. Finney explained that the moratorium was intended to preserve limited open space within city limits. He noted that storage facilities are relatively inexpensive to build, require few or no employees, and permanently occupy land that could otherwise support economic development. Mr. Finney also mentioned inquiries about open-air vehicle storage and pod-style units. Mr. Silenus expressed support for maintaining a moratorium until regulations are established and suggested exploring taxation options for storage facilities. Council members discussed existing tax structures and potential economic impacts. Mr. Moksun stated that two facilities seem sufficient for the city and suggested that if one closes, it should not automatically be replaced. He acknowledged that storage units can serve short-term needs, such as during home sales. Mr. Marovich observed that numerous storage facilities already exist in surrounding townships and across Portage County. He argued that Ravenna's limited land could be better utilized for developments aligned with community needs. The committee reached a general consensus to extend the moratorium for six months rather than one year, allowing time to draft and review ordinance language.

- The item was moved forward.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:49 P.M.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

**Christina West, Chairperson
Community & Economic Development**