

Kirtland City Council Meeting
January 12, 2026

The meeting of Kirtland City Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Ron Fenstermaker, Council President. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

Clerk of Council took roll call, the members of Council present were Ronald Fenstermaker, Scott Haymer, Sue Grazia, Joseph Smolic and Julie Symonds.

The administrative personnel present were Mayor Kevin Potter, Finance Director Louis Slapnicker, Public Works Director Joseph Fornaro, City Engineer Douglas Courtney, Assistant Law Director Mark Marong, Lieutenant Jamey Fisher, Fire Captain Frank Ponzani, and Senior Center Director Julia DeWolf.

Council President Fenstermaker stated the rules of Council were suspended for the swearing-in ceremony for the purpose of promoting Captain Matthew Killeen to Fire Chief and Brian Horvath to Sergeant of the City of Kirtland Fire Department.

Administer Oath of Office: Fire Chief Matthew Killeen

Mr. Smolic moved to **set the rules aside** to move 26-R-6 up on the Agenda. Ms. Symonds provided the second. **ROLL CALL: MOTION CARRIED 5/0 (VOTING YEA: SYMONDS, FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, GRAZIA, and SMOLIC. VOTING NAY: NONE.)**

26-R-6 **A resolution confirming the Mayor's appointment of Matthew W. Killeen as the Chief of the Division of Fire for the City of Kirtland, establishing a wage and fee arrangement, and declaring an emergency.**
(Mayor Potter)

Mr. Smolic moved to **waive the three readings**, with the second by Ms. Grazia. Council President Fenstermaker asked if there was any discussion. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL: MOTION CARRIED 5/0 (VOTING YEA: SYMONDS, FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, GRAZIA, and SMOLIC. VOTING NAY: NONE.)**

Mr. Smolic moved to **declare an emergency and adopt** the legislation. Ms. Symonds provided the second. Council President Fenstermaker asked if there was any discussion. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL: MOTION CARRIED 5/0 (VOTING YEA: SYMONDS, FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, GRAZIA, and SMOLIC. VOTING NAY: NONE.)**

Mayor Kevin Potter administered the oath of office to Chief Matthew Killeen. Mayor Potter noted that Chief Killeen had served the community for 32 years and expressed full faith and confidence in him as the new fire chief.

Administer Oath of Office: Captain Brian Horvath

Mayor Potter administered the oath of office to Sergeant Brian Horvath. Chief Killeen appointed him as his executive captain.

Mayoral Proclamation Anthony Hutton

Mayor Potter presented a proclamation to former Fire Chief Anthony Hutton, recognizing his lengthy service to the city. The proclamation detailed Chief Hutton's career, noting he joined the Kirtland Fire Department in 1989, became a full-time firefighter in April 1990, was promoted to Lieutenant in 1995, and served as Fire Chief from July 1, 2002 until his recent retirement.

Mayor Potter praised Hutton for his commitment to Kirtland, stating that he was widely respected throughout Lake County and the greater Cleveland area for his expertise in fire and EMS services.

Former Chief Hutton briefly addressed those gathered, thanking everyone for their support during his career. He specifically acknowledged past and present Kirtland firefighters, stating that they "made this job the best job in Lake County." He also thanked his wife for supporting him through the challenges of being a chief's wife.

The proclamation recognized Anthony Hutton for his outstanding contributions to the community and honored him for his dedication, leadership, and unwavering commitment to making Kirtland a better place.

Minutes of January 5, 2026 Work Session:

Council President Fenstermaker asked if there was any discussion. There was no discussion.

Mr. Smolic moved to approve the Work Session Minutes as presented, with the second by Ms. Grazia.
ROLL CALL: MOTION CARRIED 5/0 (VOTING YEA: SYMONDS, FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, GRAZIA, and SMOLIC. VOTING NAY: NONE.)

Minutes of January 5, 2025 Council Meeting:

Council President Fenstermaker asked if there was any discussion. There was no discussion.

Ms. Grazia moved to approve the Work Session Minutes as presented, with the second by Mr. Smolic.
ROLL CALL: MOTION CARRIED 5/0 (VOTING YEA: SYMONDS, FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, GRAZIA, and SMOLIC. VOTING NAY: NONE.)

Department Reports

Fire Department

Captain Ponzani reported on behalf of the Fire Department. He had no formal report and noted that the December, 2025 Fire Department report was sent out earlier today for review. He stated he was available for questions.

Police Department

Lieutenant Jamey Fisher reported on behalf of the Police Department. He had no formal report and stated he was available for questions.

Public Works/Service Department

Director Fornaro thanked his team for their hard work and extraordinary efforts during the recent snow events. Reporting that to date, there have been 35 snow events so far this winter.

Council President Fenstermaker requested that Mr. Fornaro provide an update at the next meeting regarding equipment that is currently out of service and the status of related insurance claims.

Engineering Department

Mr. Courtney provided an update on the Tibbets Road site, reporting that he and Joe visited the site with one of the owner's representatives last week and followed up with a conference call with the owner and their engineer to finalize scope issues. The engineer is working on the final plan submittal, though no submission date has been established. Mr. Courtney noted that the bank is beginning to slough off in a couple of spots, and they have expressed urgency to the owner. It was also mentioned that the property is currently for sale, though there are no updates regarding a potential buyer.

Finance Department

Mr. Slapnickner informed Council that the 2025 fiscal year accounting had been closed, and he had distributed end-of-year reports to Council members last Thursday or Friday.

Assistant to the Mayor and Senior Center Coordinator

Ms. DeWolf had no formal report. She stated she was available for questions. None were asked.

Law Department

Assistant Law Director Mark Marong had no formal report and stated he was available for questions. A council member inquired about the possibility of closing doors during meetings when outside noise becomes disruptive, while still maintaining compliance with open meeting laws. Legal counsel advised that Ohio Revised Code 121.22 requires that doors not only be unlocked but open during public meetings.

Mayor's Report/Announcements

Mayor Potter reported that the recently passed *minibus bill 2025* included \$2 million for the Kirtland sewer extension to the Route 6 corridor. The Mayor thanked Congressman David Joyce and his office, as well as Eddie Eckert, the City's Economic Development Coordinator, for their efforts in securing this funding.

Standing Committee Reports

It was noted that committee minutes should be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

Correspondence

Council received a three-page correspondence via email from Tall Oaks just prior to the meeting. Council members were asked to review it and direct any questions to legal counsel or the Mayor.

Public Comments on Matters not on the Agenda There were no comments.

Old Business

Public Comments on Matters of Old Business. There were no public comments.

26-O-4 **An Ordinance amending Section 618.14 of the Codified Ordinances of the
(Mayor Potter) City of Kirtland regarding Bow Hunting and Required Permits, and
declaring an emergency.**

This item was presented for its second reading with no action taken.

New Business

Public Comments on Agenda Items of New Business. There were no public comments on agenda items of new business.

26-R-5 **A Resolution declaring it necessary to renew the current Levy of 0.85
(Mayor Potter) Mill for community senior citizen and recreational facilities and
programs and requesting the Lake County Auditor to certify the total
current tax valuation of the city and the dollar amount of revenue that
would be generated by the levy renewal, and declaring an emergency.**

Mr. Smolic moved to **waive the three readings**, with the second by Ms. Grazia. Council President Fenstermaker asked if there was any discussion. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL: MOTION CARRIED 5/0 (VOTING YEA: SYMONDS, FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, GRAZIA, and SMOLIC. VOTING NAY: NONE.)**

Mr. Smolic moved to **declare an emergency and adopt** the legislation. Ms. Symonds provided the second. Council President Fenstermaker asked if there was any discussion. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL: MOTION CARRIED 5/0 (VOTING YEA: SYMONDS, FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, GRAZIA, and SMOLIC. VOTING NAY: NONE.)**

Council Comments: There were none.

Continuing Concerns: There were none.

Adjournment:

Mr. Smolic moved to adjourn, with the second by Ms. Symonds. The motion of Council passed by unanimous vote and the meeting adjourned at 6:27 p.m.



President of Council



Clerk of Council