

Kirtland City Council Meeting

February 17, 2026

The meeting of Kirtland City Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Ron Fenstermaker, Council President. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by a prayer led by Mr. Schulz.

Roll Call

Clerk of Council took roll call, the members of Council present were Ronald Fenstermaker, Scott Haymer, Matthew Schulz, 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, Law Director Matt Lallo, Police Department Lieutenant Jamey Fisher, Fire Chief Matthew Killeen, and Senior Center Director Julia DeWolf.

Minutes of February 2, 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 6/0 (VOTING YEA: FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, SCHULZ, GRAZIA, SMOLIC, and SYMONDS. VOTING NAY: NONE.)**

Minutes of February 2, 2025 Council Meeting:

Council President Fenstermaker asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. Schulz stated there was a matter of question on page one, paragraphs four and five, as to if these two paragraphs fit in where placed. After discussion about corrections to paragraphs 4 and 5 regarding standing committee minutes, Law Director Matthew Lallo clarified the changes needed. The modifications included deleting paragraphs 4 and 5 as requested.

Mr. Schulz moved to approve the Minutes as modified, with the second by Mr. Smolic. **ROLL CALL: MOTION CARRIED 6/0 (VOTING YEA: FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, SCHULZ, GRAZIA, SMOLIC, and SYMONDS. VOTING NAY: NONE.)**

Department Reports

Fire Department

Chief Killeen stated he had no formal report but was available for questions.

Police Department

Lieutenant Jamey Fisher reported that he has been reviewing civil service rules and city ordinances in preparation for his transition and has identified several amendments and new ordinances he would like to propose. He requested a Police and Fire Standing Committee meeting to discuss these items. Fisher explained that one ordinance directly supports safety during the Strawberry Festival, which

occurs on Father's Day weekend in June. After discussion about scheduling around budget approval and ensuring adequate time for three readings, the committee meeting was scheduled for April 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. for police department ordinance review.

Public Works/Service Department

Public Service Director Joe Fornaro thanked his crews for their excellent work during the recent wintry weather stretch. The crews are now taking advantage of better weather to perform line of sight trimming and cold patch repairs. Fornaro noted that February in Northeast Ohio limits patching options to cold patch only. He thanked Mayor Potter, Councilmen Haymer, Smolik, and Fenstermaker for visiting the garage to review capital needs.

Council President Fenstermaker brought attention to considerable damage on Billings Road's north side from heavy truck traffic, noting that the pavement edge has sunk and cracked. Mr. Fornaro acknowledged the winter's toll on roads, particularly mentioning ongoing work on Eagle Road due to frozen sanitary lines. He confirmed that ice damming has not been an issue with city buildings. Mr. Fornaro also reported that Kirtland Hills is not renewing their cost-sharing agreement for the river sensor, leaving the city to decide whether to continue the expensive monitoring alone.

Engineering Department

City Engineer Doug Courtney reported receiving a formal plan submission for the 10899 Tibbetts Road property for review. He and Fornaro continue working on the Wisner Wall project.

Councilman Schultz inquired about several capital requests, including \$104,000 for culvert identification, guardrail improvements citywide, and cemetery fencing upgrades. Mr. Fornaro explained that guardrails are always requested in the budget and that ODOT has declined to contribute funding for state routes. He noted high quotes for cemetery pillar and fencing work and the ongoing search for outside funding sources. Discussion also covered the cemetery database standardization program, which was not included in this year's budget at an estimated cost of \$25,400 plus monthly fees.

Finance Department

Finance Director Louis Slapnick reported on the city's busy period with budget processes, GAP conversion, and audit preparation. The city has filed for the Ohio Market Access Program (OMAP) to leverage the state's credit rating for better debt issuance rates. He announced the retirement of Lisa Knazek from the finance department after nine years of service, with plans to absorb her position rather than replace it. Mr. Slapnick agreed to post budget documents on the website and compile quarterly employment data showing workers living in versus outside Kirtland.

Councilwoman Simons asked about grant-seeking coordination across departments. Responding, Mayor Potter explained that departments typically oversee their own grant searches, with Mr. Fornaro particularly active in this area and the fire department having success with grants over the years. Discussion touched on potentially engaging community volunteers with grant-writing expertise to assist departments.

Assistant to the Mayor and Senior Center Coordinator

Ms. DeWolf reported that the Senior Center is in the process of closing out 2025 memberships, reminding residents that 2026 renewal is required to continue receiving newsletters. The annual city Easter-Egg hunt is scheduled for March 28th from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. at City Hall.

Law Department

Law Director Matthew Lallo reported meeting with Lieutenant Fisher regarding civil service rules and emergency appointments to provide staffing clarity for the police department. He is managing various public record requests related to city projects and zoning issues, and participating in meetings about sewers and alternative funding mechanisms.

Mayor's Report/Announcements

Mayor Potter thanked Finance Director Slapnicker for his work on the budget appropriation and department heads for their time commitment to the budget process. He acknowledged the challenging nature of the process when funding limitations prevent meeting all needs. The Mayor also thanked Councilmen Fenstermaker, Schultz, Haymer, and Smolik for their recent Saturday morning Service Department Standing Committee meeting.

Mayor Potter reported ongoing work with Eddie Eckert on Route 306 and Route 6 economic development, particularly sewer-related funding. Mayor Potter also noted recent Planning and Zoning Commission activity which included a Circle K application for the Licursi corner requiring multiple variances and referral to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Council President Fenstermaker emphasized the significant development activity occurring in the city, noting that the Circle K proposal emerged after discussions about potential sewer installation. He urged council members and community members to attend Planning and Zoning meetings to observe the actual work being done, countering social media criticism that the city is not supporting development efforts. Fenstermaker stressed that development takes time and requires open-minded consideration of proposals.

Councilman Schultz asked about road repair plans, specifically for Rockwood and Ledgewood where residents have advocated for improvements. Mayor Potter indicated that underdrains and camera work on sanitary lines would be step one, with potential reconstruction funding sought for the following year.

Standing Committee Reports

Councilman Smolik reported forwarding minutes from a past service committee meeting for review and approval at the next meeting. Planning and Zoning Committee minutes on short-term rentals were submitted by Ms. Grazia and will be available at the next meeting.

Upcoming committee meetings were confirmed: Parks and Recreation Standing Committee on March 2, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. and Police and Fire Standing Committee on April 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Correspondence

Finance Director Slapnicker noted that council received the Fiscal Officer's Certificate as part of the Agenda, noting that this is required prior to first reading of budget legislation.

Public Comments on Matters not on the Agenda

No public comments were made on matters not on the agenda.

Old Business

Public Comments on Matters of Old Business. No public comments were made on old business matters.

New Business

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

First Reading
26-R-8
(Council as a Whole)

A Resolution amending Resolution No. 25-R-79 relating to establishing Rules, Time, and Place of Council meetings for the period from December 1, 2025 through November 30, 2026, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Smolic moved to **waive the three readings**, with the second by Mr. Schulz. Council President Fenstermaker asked if there was any discussion. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL: MOTION CARRIED 6/0 (VOTING YEA: FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, SCHULZ, GRAZIA, SMOLIC, and SYMONDS. VOTING NAY: NONE.)**

Mr. Schulz moved to **declare an emergency and adopt** the legislation. Ms. Grazia provided the second. Council President Fenstermaker asked if there was any discussion. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL: MOTION CARRIED 6/0 (VOTING YEA: FENSTERMAKER, HAYMER, SCHULZ, GRAZIA, SMOLIC, and SYMONDS. VOTING NAY: NONE.)**

First Reading
26-O-9
(Mayor Potter)

An Ordinance amending Sections 220.23 and 220.26 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Kirtland regarding the Rules of Council, and declaring an emergency.

The legislation was read by title only and placed on first reading.
There was no discussion.

First Reading
26-O-10
(Mayor Potter)

An Ordinance providing for the issuance and sale of \$4,300,000 of notes, in anticipation of the issuance of bonds, for the purpose of paying costs of improving streets by reconstructing, resurfacing, grading, draining, paving, and making other improvements as designated in the plans approved or to be approved by Council, and declaring an emergency.

The legislation was read by title only and placed on first reading.
There was no discussion.

First Reading
26-O-11
(Mayor Potter)

An Ordinance setting the appropriation for the year 2026.

The legislation was read by title only and placed on first reading.
There was no discussion.

First Reading
26-R-12
(Mayor Potter)

A Resolution authorizing transfers of funds, and declaring an emergency.

The legislation was read by title only and placed on first reading.
There was no discussion.

First Reading
26-O-13
(Mayor Potter)

An Ordinance authorizing an advance of funds, repayment of advanced funds, and declaring an emergency.

The legislation was read by title only and placed on first reading.

There was no discussion.

First Reading
26-O-14
(Mayor Potter)

An Ordinance authorizing all actions necessary to accept Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) 2026 Energized Community Grant, and declaring an emergency.

The legislation was read by title only and placed on first reading.

There was no discussion.

Council Comments:

Councilman Schultz made a public service announcement about upcoming changes to dog park hours, with the drive to be gated to prevent access before sunrise. He also suggested council consider adding additional methods of communication for residents. Noting he would like Council to consider a newsletter option for distribution to residents.

Council President Fenstermaker reiterated his appreciation for the Planning and Zoning Commission's work and strongly encouraged council members to attend planning and zoning meetings to observe the significant development activity firsthand rather than relying solely on minutes. He emphasized that while substantial progress is being made, development takes time and requires careful consideration of all proposals.

Councilman Smolik concurred with Fenstermaker's encouragement to attend Planning and Zoning meetings.

Continuing Concerns: No continuing concerns were discussed.

Adjournment:

Mr. Smolic moved to adjourn, with the second by Ms. Grazia. The motion of Council passed by unanimous vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.



President of Council



Clerk of Council